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# THAT WAS *SO* LAST YEAR...

**Don't you just hate the post-Christmas come-down? That feeling of emptiness when you gut the last guy in Manhunt and finish the final mission in True Crime. Then what? It's only January and you've already run out of games?!**

CHILL OUT! Take deep breaths, gawp at pictures of half-naked women – whatever you do, calm down, because a load of great games are just around the corner. Stuff like Gran Turismo 4, Halo 2 and Half-Life 2 (yeah, yeah) are so tantalisingly close you can almost smell the blood and petrol fumes, while Sony's red-hot PSP is coming up fast behind too. Look no further than page 10 – here you'll find every game that promises to make this year Two Thousand and Phwoar.

And if you still want some fresh games, check out CVG's mammoth buyers' guide. We've reviewed *every* game that was released last year – there are loads of killer titles that'll keep your thumbs blistered well into the New Year. Satisfied now? You will be. : )

Alex Simmons Editor

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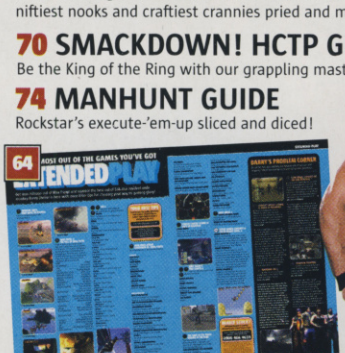

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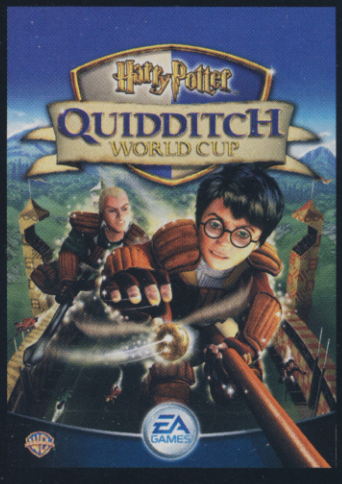


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# planet eye

HOT NEWS & GAMING GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

We're not sure but this looks like yer typical save point if you want to know

I've found it! I don't know exactly what it is I've found but... yay!

EXCLUSIVE

# REBEL WITH A CAUSE

## KAENA'S A BALLSY TEENAGER WHO RISKS EVERYTHING TO SAVE HER PEOPLE. GO GIRLFRIEND!

**She's got a receding hairline that puts Bill Bailey's to shame and dresses like a trampy cave girl. Kaena is by no means a stereotypical ultra-girly heroine like Lara Croft. There's nothing typical about her or the new Namco PS2 adventure that she stars in, which is expected to hit the UK sometime next year.**

On looks alone Kaena stands out as one of the finest fantasy actioners on Sony's mean machine. The closest visual equivalent would be Ico, but these enormously gnarled fantasy backdrops are even more enchanting.

The inspiration for the jaw-dropping look comes directly from the amazing animated Kaena movie that the game is based on. Many of the environments that appear in the cartoon have made it into the game, plus over 30 minutes of footage from the film are used in cutscenes throughout the quest.

So it comes as no surprise that Namco's newcomer is guaranteed to win the hearts of gamers everywhere with its dazzling beauty. Combine that with a wicked storyline and stacks of razor sharp action and you've got one of the most exciting games of 2004 in your sights.

Kaena the game will share visuals from the movie of the same name

### FLOWER POWER

Kaena lives in this weird Ewok-style tree village, and at the heart lies a bloody massive plant called the Axis. It's the life force for her people, but it's withering and near to death. Unfortunately the people can't just call in Ground Force and the powers of Charlie Dimmock to sort things out, so they pray to the gods for help. Fat lot of good that did!

Then one night, Kaena starts to get these odd visions where she sees the Axis calling for her

You can bet this month's pocket money that here ain't no ordinary weapon

# the team

IF YOU SEE ANY OF THESE PEOPLE WHILE OUT WALKING... RUN!

**Alex Simmons**
EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- NFS Underground
- SSX 3
- Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

This year I want to become a policeman so I can wear a suit and have shiny buttons. And I can have a dog, called Paul, so I can practise getting our contributing ed to jump through rings of fire and carry eggs back from the shop without breaking them in his mouth. Actually, forget the policeman bit. I'll just buy a whip to go with the suit and shiny buttons.

**Pete Walker**
DEP EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Prince Of Persia
- Manhunt
- Deus Ex: Invisible War

New Year's Resolution, eh? I intend to test the limits of human endurance with online first-person shooters. I've learned the routines for every Counter-Strike map, but I need to crank things up to take the temperature of my eyeballs past the point of popping, so that I can see the world as Neo sees it in Revolutions. New Year's Resolution? High resolution, baby, yeah!

**Lee Skittrell**
REVIEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Manhunt
- 1080° Avalanche
- Mario & Luigi

I want to find a brand of chewing gum that doesn't contain rat poison and make you fart like the Winds of Hades. So I can buy a packet and give it to everyone who works for CVG. Bloody stinks around here, I tell thee! Especially after lunch when some people have a hot curry/rat chewy combo. If you ever come around here, you'd better wear a peg on your nose.

**Mike Cooper**
NEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Manhunt
- NFS: Underground
- Prince Of Persia

I told my mum that I would be playing for Brazil, and she sort of believed me, so I think I really need to start playing for Brazil before she finds out and everything because she is from Brazil and that would upset her, yeah? So where can I apply for work experience with Brazil football team? We get loads of people on work ex here so it can't be that hard. Whatever.

## SEGA ANTIQUES FOR SALE

The Sega Ages collection is a series of budget-priced classics on PS2, including the likes of Space Harrier, Golden Axe and Monaco GP. Expect it to arrive some time in the spring.

## ONE-HIT KILLZONE

UPDATE!

OUT SUMMER 2004

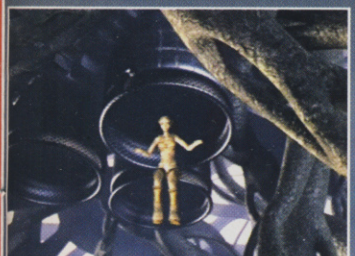
DEADLY NEW SHOTS OF SONY'S ELITE PS2 SHOOTER

help. She tells everyone but they think she's bonkers. So, being the rebellious teenager that she is, she breaks all the ancient rules and defies the high priest's orders, venturing solo in search of a way to save her people.

All the action unfolds in the third-person and sees you exploring vast, dangerous environments, gathering weapons, slaying masses of monsters and using your balding bonce to solve mysterious puzzles. Plus Kaena can upgrade her abilities along the way, much like Samus in Metroid Prime. And similarly there are heaps of hidden areas and secrets to discover depending on how adventurous you dare to be.

Namco is keeping many of Kaena's unique gameplay features under wraps until closer to its launch in Japan this spring. But we've got our finger firmly on Namco's pulse, and will be bringing you even more exciting news on Kaena as it breaks in the New Year. Until then, pore over these precious shots exclusive to Planet CVG.

*The ugly is just out of shot here to save your nerves*



*Could be the galaxy's biggest hairdryer for the gal with the biggest forehead!*

***Only a couple of months ago Miyamoto suggested that Mario 128 would stun the world with innovative new gameplay features. This tech demo didn't reveal much in terms of action, sadly***

# MARIO 128 IN DOUBT

## THE TRUE SEQUEL TO MARIO 64 MIGHT NEVER APPEAR ON CUBE!

**Mario Sunshine drops giant mushroomy turds on almost every other 3D platformer out there, and it isn't even the proper sequel to N64's legendary leaper.**

Everyone (especially Shigeru Miyamoto) knows that Mario 128 is the true successor. A game that was first showcased with the impressive '100 Marios' tech demo back in 2000 at the Space World game show. We've been waiting impatiently ever since.

Three years on, and suddenly we're hit with shocking news that Mario 128 could just be a pipe dream for Cube. In a recent interview with CNN Money, George Harrison, US vice president of marketing, went on the record to say that Mario 128's appearance on Cube is "definitely not certain".

We can only pray that Mr Harrison had just suffered a severe blow to the head prior to making that comment.

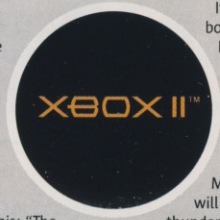
TOP SECRET PLANS UNCOVERED!

# XBOX 2 THIS EASTER

## MICROSOFT SET TO UNVEIL NEW MONSTER CONSOLE IN MARCH 2004

**Bill Gates has an army of geeks busy at work in an underground lair, putting the finishing touches to an Xbox 2 demo that's expected to take place at Easter.**

This month CVG managed to infiltrate Microsoft's secret hidey-hole under the cover of darkness and speak to a geek insider who wishes to remain anonymous. Our bespectacled informant revealed this: "The plan is to talk specs and show early tech demos [of Xbox 2] at a US event next Easter. This will provide a platform leading towards something more substantial at E3."




The show he's referring to is GDC, the Games Developers Conference that takes place annually on March 22-26. It was at this very show back in 2000 that the Microsoft revealed Xbox.

It's rumoured that both Sony and Nintendo will be making major hardware announcements at E3 in May 2004. So if Xbox 2 is indeed laid bare this March, the unveiling will no doubt steal thunder from its giant Japanese competitors.

Stay tuned over the coming months for every fact-packed story on the next batch of killer consoles. Read it here first!

# WHEN FANTASY BECOMES REALITY

First look

## SQUARE ENIX UNLEASHES DREAMY PICS OF FINAL FANTASY XII ON PS2

■ RPG juggernaut Final Fantasy gets its 12th crack of the whip, and is gearing up for a summer release in Japan next year. But considering that FF X-2 is

**RELEASE DATE SHOCKER**

only scheduled to reach the UK then, we reckon FF XII won't make an appearance over here until early 2005! So don't be holding your breath now.

■ All the action in FF XII takes place in the world of Ivalice, the same place that Final Fantasy Tactics on GBA is set. However, the events that unfold in this new

**GBA UNIVERSE GROWS**

adventure take place in a different time. There will be similarities in terms of gameplay, with Judges playing a major role in the in the PS2 game too.

■ Meet the sun-kissed new stars of FF XII. Vaan, the young man seen here whispering to a bizarre fruit, is an orphan and small-time crook with wild ambition.

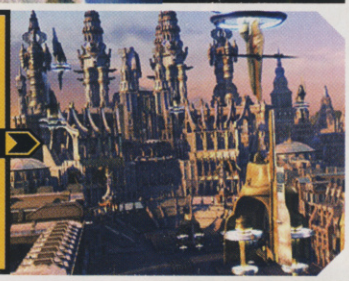
**BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN**

Ashe, pictured coyly picking her perky nose, is the Princess of Dalmasca and surprisingly nifty with a sword. We expect their destinies to intertwine.

■ The Final Fantasy games aren't shy of grandeur and pomp, and this latest gig appears to boast some of the most extraordinarily flamboyant environments.

**GET OFF MY LAND!**

As for the story, the game is set against the backdrop of a war between the Arcadia and Rosaria Empires. The Arcadians capture Dalmasca, and she ain't best pleased.



■ One of the most exciting snippets of news is that Final Fantasy XII will be entirely 3D, and you'll be able to move the camera around to suit your every need. And in

**POINTS OF VIEW**

case you were wondering, all the old favourites of levelling-up, team-building, magic managing, and random battles will be here in full force.

**Graeme Boyd**
STAFF WRITER
CURRENT FAVES
- Manhunt
- ESPN NFL
- Links 2004

Tell you what, I really should stop finding everything so funny. Funny, eh? Hahhahahahahahaaa... bollocks. Not funny. Not funny. Not funny. You want to know something furfny? Well, sorry I don't. Not next year anyway. Keep the funny stuff away from me, cos I just can't stand it any more. Give me things I can handle, like Holland vs Scotland. Not funny.

**Paul Davies**
CONTRIBUTING ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Project Gotham Racing 2
- Pro Evo 3
- Top Spin

My New Year's Resolution is to put my clothes on in a different order every day, even if it means wearing my pants on my head sometimes. You only live once, right? Oh yeah, unless you're Jenny who used to draw nudes for cash in ancient Egypt according to her. Maybe my NYR should be to ignore the hell out of Jenny because I'm getting sick of her crappy old lies all the time.

**Jaime Smith**
ART EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Pinball
- Pro Evo 3
- Mobile Phone Mini-Golf

I think gurning will be really in for 2004, so I aim to be one of the first to be seen doing it. Last year I did grimacing, and it's really becoming fashionable now. Grimacing is just taking off in Spain, you'll notice Beckham doing it quite a lot, but it just goes to show he can't have everything: a beautiful wife, but no good gurns, eh? Eh? Mine will be famous.

**Jenny McComb**
SENIOR DESIGNER
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Pinball
- Zelda: The Wind Waker
- Wario World

My New Year's Resolution is to be a lot meaner. It has been the exact same thing every year since my best mate walked off with my boyfriend so... what are you gonna do about it, eh? EH! What you frickin' starin' at you frickin' ugly low life?! I'm so mean every time I walk through Tesco all the milk turns sour! Yer! Have a rubbish New Year.

**Andrew Holmes**
ACTING PROD ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Gregory Horror Show
- Banjo Kazooie
- Manhunt

I don't believe in New Year's Resolutions because there always has to be somebody who doesn't, just to be a pain in the arse, and I thought that could be me. How do you like them eggs, eh? How do you like that? I'm going to go off and eat loads of cake, and do everything I'm not supposed to for a year and if I like it well, who knows, I could go on like this forever.

## Get up and Play!

### DESIGN A GAME FOR EYETOY

Sony is offering an LCD TV plus home cinema system to the best new idea for EyeToy's upcoming Play 2. Log onto uk.playstation.com, download a design template and scribble down your idea then send it to Sony before 6 Jan to stake your claim.

### VIRTUA FIGHTER RPG DUE 2004

Sega finally unveiled its Virtua Fighter RPG. Its full title is Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation: Ambition of the Judement Six. This Action RPG stars two new characters, and is due for PS2 and GC in Summer 2004. More next ish!

### 100 REASONS WHY 2004 WILL BE GAMING HEAVEN

TURN OVER NOW!

Over the page you'll find 100 reasons why next year will be hotter than Mike's a-hole after one of his Mum's 'special dinners'. Judging by his face on a day like that we're talking STEAMY!

## Hot or Not?

**MIYAMOTO**

Legendary Nintendo creative genius accepts the Life Achievement Award at the CVG Golden Joysticks. We'd like to thank him again for all the amazing adventures we've enjoyed through his games.

**PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2**

If you've got an Xbox with Xbox Live you have to own this game. It's one of the greatest racers we've ever played, plus it's so easy to hook up with your mates online for a hair-raising stylish spin.

**POKEMON COLOSSEUM**

We're dead into it, and we reckon you will be. Don't deny your love of Pokémon, you're only kidding yourself! Everyone needs to acknowledge your Pokémon side. In fact we hear it makes you sexy.

**PSP RACING**

A Dutch games developer is first to officially announce it is working on a PSP game. It will be a racing game, and is currently known as PSP Racing. How long did it take them to dream that up? Burp.

**HALF-LIFE 2**

Oh the game will be cool for sure but how long is Valve going to string us along on this? We're pissed because HL2 was promised for Christmas, now it seems Valve is aping those Grand Delaying Masters at id Software. Boo!

STOP PRESS

# COLOSSALLY COOL, MAN

## WE GO HANDS-ON WITH THE MOTHER OF ALL POKE-GAMES AND COME AWAY WITH OUR EYES FRIED AND POKEBALLS LICKED

**Like a Pokéball lobbed through our office window, shattering glass around our ears and slicing us up real nice, Pokémon Colosseum came smashing onto our desks just a little too late for a full preview this issue.**

Instead we thought we'd treat you to a bunch of exclusive screens and first impressions.

### RAICHU REVOLUTION

The game double-teams you with two game modes to try. The battle mode is just like the Pokémon Stadium games on N64, where you pick a squad of Pokémon and make them fight.

Just as before you can use your lovingly nurtured/cruelly neglected Poké-beasts in the Cube game by connecting your GBA (yep, even the crap ones like Castform) and there's a stupid amount of leagues and matches to play. What makes the game a real revolution for Pokémon fans is the story mode. Played out like a traditional turn-based battlin' role-player, complete with a whole squad of Pokémon able to battle at once, this is like Final Fantasy for Pokémaniacs. You need to tail a band of bad guys who have been transforming beasts into Dark Pokémon. It's the perfect answer to those crying out for a true 3D Pokémon adventure all these years. Watch out and wait for the UK version though, as there's a risk of having your GBA saves wiped if you use 'em in an import copy. Bah!

**NEXT MONTH FULL BALLS OUT PREVIEW**

THE NEWS IN PICTURES

# PLACE YOUR BETS NOW!

BOOKIES HAVE SET THE ODDS ON WHICH GAME WILL RACE TO THE TOP OF THE CHARTS THIS CHRISTMAS. POP IDOL IS FAVOURITE TO WIN AT 1/9! FIFA 2004 IS 10/1, AND DOUBLE DASH!! IS A MASSIVE OUTSIDER AT 40/1.

Illustration: Team Artonomy © Computer And Video Games

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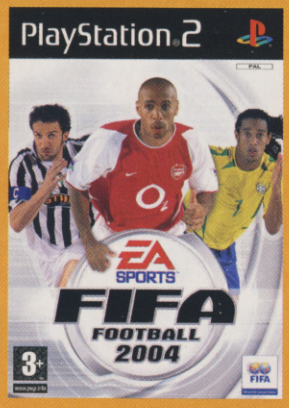


## FIFA FOOTBALL 2004

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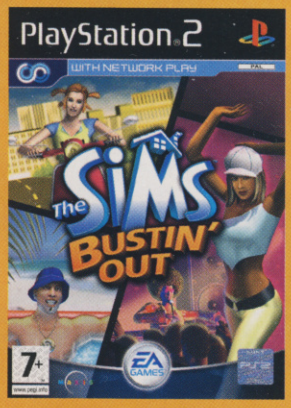


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# 2004

HOT NEWS & GAMING GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE
NEWS SPECIAL

# 100 REASONS WHY 2004 WILL BE GAMING HEAVEN

**2003 WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR GAMES, BUT 2004 LOOKS SET TO BE EVEN BETTER. GET READY FOR SOME KILLER SEQUELS, HIGHLY ANTICIPATED ORIGINAL TITLES AND REVOLUTIONARY NEW HARDWARE. BEST START SAVING NOW!**

## 93 MONSTER HUNTER

**There's lots of online action promised for 2004, but Capcom's Monster Hunter is already one of our favourites.**

The action is best described as Phantasy Star meets Resident Evil. Choose your character and abilities then head online to a world populated with dinosaurs, dragons and other strange creatures. Forming a guild with fellow hunters will help you tackle the big beasts and creating a base camp will offer you some protection. You'll certainly need it while you're on the hunt for monsters. Remember, the monsters are also hunting you!

## FINAL FANTASY VII

**Advent Children makes its way onto the big screen**

91

No it's not a game sequel to the most famous chapter in Final Fantasy history. This is an hour-long CG movie that will reveal more about Cloud and friends. But it's not the only game that's getting a movie makeover this year. Christian Slater stars in Alone In The Dark and Milla Jovovich's back in Resident Evil Apocalypse. There are also plans to bring Silent Hill and Castlevania to the big screen!

## 90 OUTRUN 2

**An arcade legend is about to return. Sega's famous Ferrari racer is gearing up for another frantic cross-country race with a beautiful girl at your side.**

This time there's a choice of famous Ferraris from a Dino to a F-50, six gears with manual or automatic transmission and remixes of Magical Sound Shower and the other famous tunes on the radio. As with most Japanese racers there's now a greater emphasis on drifting around corners, and in the new Heart Attack Mode you must follow the outrageous instructions of your female passenger. Bloody women drivers, always taking over...

**100 ADVENT RISING** Xbox sci-fi shooter using the Unreal Warfare engine, very much in the Halo mould with a cracking script from Orson Scott Card ☐

**99 ASTRO BOY** Sega takes to the skies with the cult Japanese character Astro Boy. Hitmaker tackles the PS2 version, Treasure is on GBA duties! ☐

**98 SNAKE PLISSKEN CHRONICLES** The star of Escape From New York gets his own Kurt Russell-voiced PS2 game courtesy of Namco ☐

**97 DEAD TO RIGHTS 2** Namco hits back with another dose of gun-pumping action on all formats. A new graphics engine and fresh play modes should add to the excitement ☐

**96 RACE DRIVER 2** Codemasters gives Xbox owners a Live-enabled sequel to their career-based racer. Get ready for online truck races and more ☐

**95 HITMAN: CONTRACTS** Agent 47 returns on PS2, Xbox and PC with more dangerous assassination missions. Developer Io Interactive is promising an "epic and disturbing" experience ☐

**94 JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH** Jules Verne's novel becomes a PC adventure with plenty of Victorian period detailing ☐

**93 MONSTER HUNTER** Capcom serves up four-player PS2 online creature-capturing action, the modern equivalent of rounding up villagers with pitchforks ☐

**92 SPY FICTION** All-format stealth action with top gadgets such as invisibility suits, and featuring two uniquely skilled heroes. Should make the wait for Metal Gear 3 more bearable ☐

**91 FINAL FANTASY VII: ADVENT CHILDREN** The Spirits Within may have been a bomb but that hasn't stopped Square from having another go at creating an all CG movie ☐

**90 SECOND SIGHT** Top secret stealth action from TimeSplitters developers Free Radical. Fans will be pleased to learn that TimeSplitters 3 is also on the way ☐

**89 BLOOD WILL TELL** More manga-based action from Sega. This time a PS2-exclusive Samurai adventure with hundreds of demons to slay ☐

**88 RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2** Realistic Xbox rally game with car damage that Colin McRae and other rally rivals can only dream of – should do well ☐

**87 STEEL BATTALION: LINE OF CONTACT** The giant Xbox mech game with the really expensive controller gets an online sequel. A good excuse to dust down that behemoth of a peripheral ☐

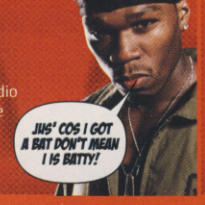
**86 THE BARD'S TALE** Modern PC take on the old Apple II classic that sold over a million copies, with the RPG's original producer Brian Fargo on board ☐

**85 KATAMARI DAMASHII** Roll a sticky ball around a city and chuckle as objects get glued to it. We're guessing the PS2 game will get a name change over here ☐

■ KONAMI IS KEEN TO MAKE A SOLID SNAKE MOVIE, METAL GEAR CREATOR HIDEO KOJIMA WANTS TO DIRECT ■ IF THE NEW GTA SPIN-OFF IS SET IN SAN ANDREAS, EXPECT AN EARTHQUAKE TO PLAY A PART IN THE ACTION

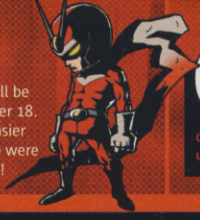
## WHAT UP GANGSTA

Bullet magnet 50 Cent revealed in a recent radio interview that he'd be appearing in a GTA-style game with rap's most famous celebrity couple, Eminem and Dr Dre. Nothing official's been announced, but we'll keep you posted.




## VIEWTIFUL JOE GOES SOFT

A new version of Capcom's cartoon masterpiece will be cartwheeling onto GameCube in Japan for December 18. Renamed Viewtiful Joe Revival, it will feature an easier difficulty option dubbed Sweet Mode. And here we were thinking that Japanese gamers were hardcore. Pah!



**THIS MONTH'S WORST RUMOUR**

Outrun 2 will only be coming out on PlayStation 2, leaving Xbox and GameCube chewing on its dust. Odd, especially as the arcade game is run using technology very similar to Xbox's.

**84** **VAN HELSING** PS2 and Xbox tie-in with the movie of the same name. Battle werewolves, vampires and other monsters. Hugh Jackman stars in the lead role ☐

**83** **GRADIUS V** Old-fashioned horizontally scrolling shooter with mouth-watering visuals and endless waves of alien ships and power-ups ☐

**82** **ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS** Characters from the Onimusha series get to battle in this PS2 weapons-based beat 'em up that should please fans of Soulcalibur ☐

**81** **XENOSAGA** Prequel to the cult Japanese RPG Xenogears, a dazzling mix of sci-fi and gore wrapped up in an intricate plot. Only on PS2. ☐

**80** **OUTRUN 2** The most famous racer of the 80s gets a long-awaited arcade sequel – get behind the wheel of a Ferrari and zoom across the highways of America ☐

**79** **STARCRAFT: GHOST** The real-time strategy series gets an injection of action in this first-person shooter spin-off for PC and Xbox ☐

**78** **TRIBES: VENGEANCE** One of the first massively multiplayer PC shooters is back for more intense, full-scale sci-fi battles and an epic family-spanning storyline ☐

**77** **PLAYBOY: THE MANSION** Become Hugh Hefner and build-up your bunny-loving empire on PC. Could be a successful mix of Sims-style interaction and Sim City big business ☐

**76** **MEDAL OF HONOR: PACIFIC ASSAULT** Rising Sun may have disappointed console fans but Medal Of Honor heads to the Far East again for another PC shooter ☐

**75** **THE INCREDIBLES** Pixar's superhero comedy is set to be one of the biggest movies of 2004. The inevitable console spin-off games should prove more fun than Finding Nemo ☐

**74** **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY** Following the success of England in the Rugby World Cup, there'll be more interest for this PS2 sim from the makers of Jonah Lomu Rugby ☐

**73** **BOKTAI: THE SUN IS IN YOUR HAND** A light-sensing special cartridge and a vampire-busting adventure make this one of the GBA's most exciting prospects ☐

**72** **THE GETAWAY 2** Another London-based PS2 crime spree! Expect more street battles with the rozzers and improved car handling this time ☐

**71** **VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE BLOODLINES** This mix of action and RPG looks fantastic and so it should, powered by the Half-Life 2 engine. A guaranteed PC biggie ☐

**70** **SWORD OF MANA** One of the greatest RPGs to grace the SNES is brought to the GBA. It looks like Zelda and can be played co-operatively with a friend ☐

**69** **LEISURE SUIT LARRY: MAGNA CUM LAUDE** Return of the not-so-smooth-talking playboy on PC. Plenty of humour and scantily clad ladies are on the cards ☐

**68** **BLACK 9** A sci-fi mix of third-person shooter and RPG for PC, Xbox and PS2. Perform missions for the nine battling factions and develop special character skills ☐

**67** **MIDDLE EARTH ONLINE** Create a fellowship between Men, Dwarves, Elves and Hobbits and prepare to battle Sauron in this epic role-player for PC ☐

**66** **TIM BURTON'S THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS** The stop-motion classic is recreated for PS2. As Jack Skellington you must rescue your beloved Sally from Oogie Boogie's clutches ☐

**65** **POKÉMON COLOSSEUM** Fans of Ruby and Sapphire can unleash their caught Pokémon on the GameCube, with four-player battles and a stack of mini-games ☐

**64** **KAENA** Based on an upcoming Japanese CG movie being co-developed by Namco exclusively for PS2. You can expect bizarre characters and stunning graphics ☐

**63** **CONKER: LIVE AND UNCUT** The original was a foul-mouthed 3D adventure. Live and Uncut is a team-based first-person shooter coming only to Xbox ☐

**62** **SID MEIER'S PIRATES** The creator of Civilization returns to one of his oldies. A swashbuckling strategy-filled adventure sailing onto PC ☐

**61** **PIKMIN 2** Guide the Pikmin creatures to safety once again on GameCube. Now with two-player co-operative play and new breeds of Pikmin ☐

**60** **THE BATTLE FOR MIDDLE EARTH** EA goes to town with its breathtaking movie-inspired RTS that uses the Command & Conquer: Generals engine. Exclusive to PC ☐

**59** **IRON MAN** Another Marvel-adapted biggie is in production for all formats. Take on the role of Tony Stark, a regular guy with a super-powered suit... made of iron! ☐

**58** **SPIDER-MAN 2** The new movie will hit cinema screens next summer. The all-format title is already looking a lot better than the last tie-in – we're keeping out fingers crossed ☐

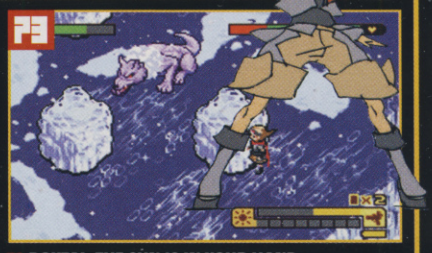
**SP** **HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2: ANNIVERSARY EDITION** The old-skool fighters return in a special 15th anniversary PS2 edition that features the World Warrior, Dash, Turbo, Super and Super X incarnations of characters ☐

## GIANTS OF THE GBA REALM

### PORTABLE PLEASURES TO LIGHT UP YOUR HANDHELD

**38 F-ZERO: LEGEND OF FALCON**
Based on the Japanese cartoon, this fiery follow-up sees you take control of the cast from the animated hit in a series of story-led showdowns. It's so fast it'll break the sound barrier, and news of multiplayer action using only one cart promises great value.

**53 METROID: ZERO MISSION**
Samus wowed handheld fans with her debut appearance on GBA at the tail end of 2002, and her second appearance promises to be every bit as explosive. More fierce action and vast exploration! You'll love it.




**73 BOKTAI: THE SUN IS IN YOUR HAND**
Metal Gear creator Hideo Kojima brings his wildest ideas to life in this enlightening GBA adventure. It's possibly the most quirky and original quest ever to appear on a handheld, thanks to its bizarre gameplay requiring you to capture and store up real sunlight.

**70 SWORD OF MANA**
Any gaming granddads out there will recall Sword Of Mana on SNES, and many RPG gurus still consider it the daddy of magical adventures. It's been reworked for GBA, and the results should be stunning.

## THE INCREDIBLES

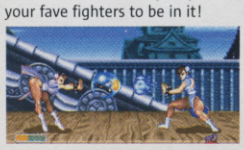
THQ has already grabbed the game rights to The Incredibles as part of a three-picture deal that started with Finding Nemo. Next on the slate is this superhero comedy. The movie looks great and there's plenty of scope for the fun to translate into a cracking game.

## PP PLAYBOY: THE MANSION

Talk about your all time greatest game concepts. In Playboy: The Mansion you play Hugh Hefner! As the head of the Playboy empire you get to rub shoulders with celebrities, throw parties and attend photo shoots. A nice touch is that you set your own goals for success, whether that's reaching a magazine circulation target or achieving a level of fame – hey, it's up to you.

## SP HYPER STREET FIGHTER 2: ANNIVERSARY EDITION

What better way to celebrate Street Fighter's 15th birthday than by putting the most famous fighters from the series in one brand new beat 'em up. Expect all your fave fighters to be in it!



## THE BATTLE FOR MIDDLE EARTH

Real-time strategy fans are in for a treat with The Battle For Middle Earth. Experience the epic battles from The Lord Of The Rings trilogy complete with castle sieges, Cave Trolls, the Balrog and the Nazgul. The action is being cooked up by the folks behind Command & Conquer Generals and will boast both good and evil campaigns and voiceovers from the main cast.

## TOP FIVE SHOOTERS OF 2004

■ WILL MARIO DITCH GAMECUBE? RUMOURS SUGGEST THE PLUMBER'S NEXT OUTING WILL BE ON THE GAMECUBE SUCCESSOR ■ ANOTHER GRAN TURISMO WILL HIT OUR SCREENS, THIS TIME THE VEHICLES WILL BOAST TWO WHEELS

## WINNING ELEVEN 7 SUBSTITUTE

Japan's Pro Evo 3 twin is being updated and revamped. Konami is planning to iron out any glitches that appeared first time round in Winning Eleven 7 International. It'll also feature improved player animation, up-to-date teams and more real player names. Kick off is set for February 29.

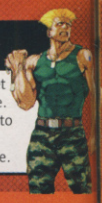
## RELEASE THE BEAST

Capcom's has just confirmed that it'll be letting Monster Hunter off its leash in March 2004 for Japan. The PS2 exclusive creature killer is online, and features team-based play, like Resident Evil Outbreak. Stay tuned for a UK release date.

## HYPER UPPERCUTS ARCADES

STOP PRESS

There are plans to bring a version of Hyper Street Fighter II: The Anniversary Edition to the arcade. By the time CVG hits the shelves you'll be able to pick up a copy of the PS2 game on Japanese import. We'll be busting it wide open next issue.



# 50 THE SIMS 2

With the original and add-on packs continuing to sell by the bucket-load, The Sims 2 will be a blessing for addicts who can't escape the clutches of their small friends. This is the first true sequel to the phenomenal series and for the first time you get to guide your Sim through life. The DNA of your Sim will be passed on to future generations, creating family bonds and character traits that children will inherit. Also if your Sim is too lazy and spends their days reclining on the couch, you'll soon see them start to pile on the pounds.

## 45 ARMED AND DANGEROUS

**With a million first-person shooters set for release in 2004 it's going to take something very special or extremely stupid to stand out from the crowd.**

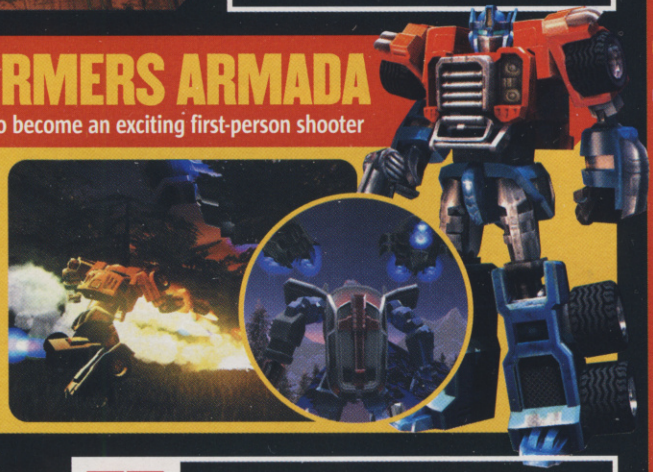
Armed and Dangerous is definitely in the latter camp, but in a good way. It's an over-the-top explosive shooter with as much emphasis on humour as enemy AI. The bizarre weapons available include a Vindaloo Rocket Launcher and a Topsy-Turvy bomb that momentarily turns the world upside down, sending enemies back to Earth with a crunch.

## 48 KINGDOM HEARTS 2

The original was an exciting fusion of the Final Fantasy series and classic Disney characters that went on to sell over 3.3 million copies worldwide. The Disney licence was brilliantly used with each world you visited based on a different Disney movie. However, eagle-eyed gamers will have spotted some Disney movies that weren't included. Expect the sequel to feature The Lion King, Hunchback Of Notre Dame and new movie Brother Bear, along with more Mickey Mouse.

# TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

**The ace cartoon is set to become an exciting first-person shooter**



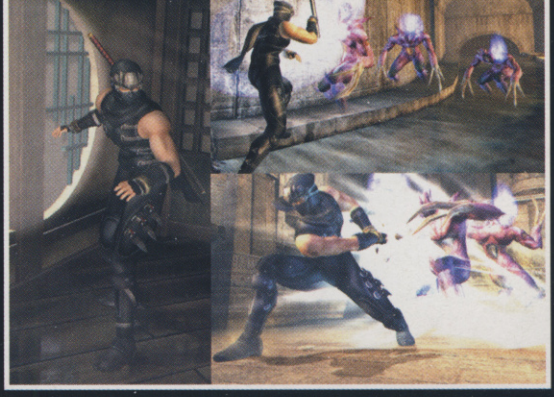
**36** **The designers have really gone to town on the transforming abilities of the stars. If you tire of traversing levels in your robot guise, you can transform into a vehicle and drive across a level. Weapon upgrades are also smart, as Mini-cons and smaller robots can be combined to create new weapons and enhance your abilities.**

## TOP TEN ONLINE CONSOLE GAMES OF 2004

3. HALO
4. GRAN TURISMO 4
11. KILLZONE
14. RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK
15. SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW
43. SOCOM II: U.S. NAVY SEALS
46. TRUE FANTASY ONLINE LIVE
47. SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA TRAIN
52. DEAD OR ALIVE ONLINE
53. CONKER: LIVE AND UNCUT

## 29 NINJA GAIDEN

Star of Dead Or Alive Ryu Hyabusa returns to our screens in an update of his first starring role. Ninja Gaiden is being touted as an action game that will redefine the boundaries of the genre. We're promised gory battles that will boast bloody realism and revolutionary Xbox Live compatibility that Tecmo is currently keeping tightly under wraps.

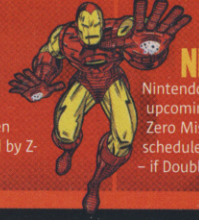


56. **SUDEKI** Four heroes including a gunslinger and legendary swordsman team up in an epic Xbox RPG that boasts large worlds and Hong Kong-style cinematic combat ☐
55. **FIREFIGHTER FD-18** Douse arson attacks in a busy metropolis. The PS2 flame effects look blisteringly hot and backdrafts, flash-overs and chemical explosions are all promised ☐
54. **NINA** Tekken character Nina Williams gets a solo PS2 adventure, promising plenty of fight action along with stealthy missions and a cool X-ray feature ☐
53. **DEAD OR ALIVE ONLINE** The buxom beat 'em up is back and heading to Xbox Live. Pick your favourite fighter and prepare to battle human opponents online ☐
52. **METROID: ZERO MISSION** Another 2D platform outing for Samus Aran. This should be another dose of platforming perfection for the GBA ☐
51. **SINGLES – FLIRT UP YOUR LIFE** Take control of two housemates in this PC perv 'em up and see the sparks fly. This borrows elements of The Sims and Big Brother and adds erotic action! ☐
50. **THE SIMS 2** Take further control of your pet people on PC. Now your families can age and have kids, but will they still act crazy and piss their pants? ☐
49. **WARIO WARE INC.** The GBA gem heads to the GameCube in a big screen multiplayer party game that promises to be just as bonkers as ever ☐
48. **KINGDOM HEARTS 2** The stars of Final Fantasy and the Disney universe team up once again on PS2 to fight the forces of darkness. Now with more Mickey! ☐
47. **SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN** The PS2 debut for Gabe Logan provides not only a brand new adventure for the secret agent but a team-based online game too ☐
46. **TRUE FANTASY ONLINE LIVE** The maker of PS2's Dark Cloud serves up a Massively Multiplayer Online RPG for Xbox Live! Who needs Final Fantasy XI? ☐
45. **ARMED AND DANGEROUS** Tongue-in-cheek multi-format third-person shooter with some of the most outrageous weapons ever seen, including penguins and Great White sharks ☐
44. **BREAKDOWN** A first-person Xbox adventure that mixes an amnesia-filled storyline with fistfights, puzzle solving and gunplay ☐
43. **SOCOM II: U.S. NAVY SEALS** Another round of online PS2 team-based action. New missions plus enhanced originals along with new game types should make it another hit ☐
42. **FABLE** Peter Molyneux borrows elements from his own Black & White in this massive Xbox RPG, where your character physically alters depending on your deeds ☐
41. **ONIMUSHA 3** There are plenty of cinematic overtones in this new PS2 episode. Actor Jean Reno has a part and martial arts star Donnie Yen directs the cutscenes ☐
40. **EVERQUEST II** After many years of sucking in gamers, the world's favourite online role-player gets a PC sequel. Should be as addictive as the original ☐
39. **KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER** Capture and raise magical creatures to defeat an evil troll king. Rare's Xbox adventure was originally set for GameCube until Microsoft came calling ☐
38. **F-ZERO: LEGEND OF FALCON** New handheld F-Zero racer for the GBA that's out in Japan already. We doubt the new cartoon series will make it here, though ☐
37. **DONKEY KONGA** GameCube rhythm action fun with Donkey Kong and the coolest peripheral since Samba's maracas – mini bongo drums! ☐
36. **TRANSFORMERS ARMADA** The Autobots battle the Decepticons in this exciting PS2 shooter. Take control of Optimus Prime and pals and get ready to transform ☐
35. **FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR** Xbox shooter based on a light infantry training simulator used by the US Army to improve squad-based tactics. Sir, yes sir! ☐
34. **THE MATRIX ONLINE** Dodge bullets, perform martial arts and jump across rooftops as the virtual thrills of the Matrix becomes a massively multiplayer online PC experience ☐
33. **JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING** Another multi-format outing for Bond, with an impressive list of real actors on voice duty, including Dame Judi Dench and Brosnan, Pierce Brosnan! ☐
32. **TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES** The heroes in a half-shell return to our screens in a multiplayer beat 'em up that looks as cool as the cartoon. It's coming on all formats ☐
31. **FINAL FANTASY XI!** Under-wraps new PS2 adventure in the famous series, but with no sign of FF XI for Europe will there be a backlash? ☐
30. **R: RACING EVOLUTION** The evolution of the Ridge Racer series appears on PS2, Xbox and GC. The cars now handle more realistically and it's wrapped up in an engrossing story mode. ☐
29. **NINJA GAIDEN** Dead or Alive star Ryu Hayabusa gets his own Xbox adventure, hacking and slashing in sumptuous environments ☐

DUE TO DEVELOPMENT DELAYS THE PSP COULD LAUNCH WITH ONLY FIRST-PARTY SUPPORT. IF SO, THE GETAWAY AND GRAN TURISMO WILL BE LAUNCH TITLES ■ NEW VERSIONS OF SMACKDOWN! AND PES WILL BOTH FEATURE ONLINE PLAY

## WHAT A MARVELLOUS PAIR!

Activision has a couple of new Marvel adaptations in the pipeline. Iron Man will finally debut on console, and there are also plans for another X-Men action adventure. Both games are to be developed by Z-Axis the team behind the Dave Mirra games.



## NINTENDO DATES NEWCOMERS

Nintendo has announced US release dates for three of its biggest upcoming titles. Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles on GC and Metroid: Zero Mission both come out on February 9, with Pokémon Colosseum scheduled for March 22. Hopefully the UK dates won't differ too much – if Double Dash!! is anything to go by we could even get them sooner.

## GTA DOUBLE-PACK DELAY

Reliable retail sources reveal that Xbox owners will now have to wait until after Christmas for their double slice of GTA pie. The GTA III/Vice City combo is expected to blast onto UK shelves on January 2.

28 **FORBIDDEN SIREN** The makers of Silent Hill return with a new dose of PS2-based survival horror. The best innovation is the ability to view the action through your pursuer's eyes ☐

27 **KILLER 7** A graphic novel-styled GC espionage adventure. Take control of a hitman struggling with seven multiple personalities as you try to stop a wave of global terrorism ☐

26 **ROME: TOTAL WAR** As seen powering TV's Time Commanders, take control of the Roman armies and fight barbarian tribes in this strategy epic for PC ☐

25 **THE WARRIORS** The cult gang movie gets the game treatment courtesy of GTA developers, Rockstar. This better be good or we'll cry ☐

24 **BC** Survive prehistoric times by protecting your tribe from predatory dinosaurs and discovering technology to aide your evolution. And it's coming to Xbox ☐

23 **RESIDENT EVIL 4** Capcom squeezes killer graphics out of the Cube as it serves up another instalment of Resident Evil action. You get possessed too! ☐

22 **BATTLEFIELD VIETNAM** The makers of the online PC shooter Battlefield 1942 take us to a new theatre of war. This time out it's the jungles of Vietnam ☐

21 **DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR** Set 20 years after the original, this should be a unique blend of cyberpunk thrills, RPG abilities and a gripping, conspiracy filled plot. It's on PC and Xbox ☐

20 **PERFECT DARK ZERO** Joanna Dark is back and headed to Xbox with more sci-fi weaponry in the sequel to N64's first-person giant ☐

19 **CASTLEVANIA** The Castlevania series once again steps cautiously into 3D territory. Looks like the tricky transition will finally pay off on PS2 ☐

18 **RISE TO HONOUR** Jet Li stars in a martial arts action adventure exclusively for PS2, with his undercover cop caught in the middle of a Hong Kong gang war ☐

17 **PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4** Not announced yet, but you know it's coming. This year, one way or another the action's going online, even if it means releasing on Xbox! ☐

16 **DEUS EX 3** Development is already underway on the sequel to Invisible War on PC and Xbox. We can't even begin to imagine how stunningly interactive it'll be ☐

15 **SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW** Sam Fisher heads to the jungle for more stealthy missions on all formats, armed with plenty of new gadgets and multiplayer online thrills ☐

14 **RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK** The horror heads online for PS2. Hook up with fellow survivors and prepare to escape from Raccoon City, but who do you trust? ☐

13 **METROID PRIME 2** Nintendo is keeping the Cube sequel to Prime firmly under wraps, but we're certain that it'll be another sci-fi masterpiece with GBA connectivity ☐

12 **DRIVER 3** Take to the streets of Nice, Istanbul and Miami as you pursue criminals both on foot and in any car that takes your fancy in this PS2/Xbox superstar ☐

11 **KILLZONE** This team-based PS2 shooter is already being touted as a Halo beater – expect awesome AI and set pieces if it's to go the distance ☐

10 **E3** The biggest game show on the planet is lining up for a special 2004 with the debut of the PSP and a new hardware announcement from Nintendo is already planned ☐

9 **FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES** A Cube exclusive chapter in the FF series. It's more action-oriented than the PlayStation titles, with real-time battles and co-operative four-player thrills ☐

8 **DOOM III** Go up against the forces of Hell in the most intense first-person shooter ever seen on Xbox or PC. All the classic weapons are back and the atmosphere is terrifying ☐

7 **THE MOVIES** Take control of a film studio, from the silent era to the modern age. Select your stars, choose scripts, shoot movies and get rich – or not. On PC and PS2. ☐

6 **GTA SEQUEL** It's not GTA 4, but a sequel to Vice City will be heading to consoles in time for Christmas. Place your bets now for it being the festive number one! ☐

5 **METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER** Discover Solid Snake's roots in PS2's adventure set in the 1960s. It requires SAS-style survival techniques and greater emphasis on close-quarters combat ☐

4 **GRAN TURISMO 4** PS2's Real Driving Simulator returns with an even greater sense of realism, improved physics and online play ☐

3 **HALO 2** The epic space war hits earth with Master Chief facing off against a Covenant invasion. Killer visuals and online play add to the Xbox experience ☐

2 **HALF-LIFE 2** The first was a classic, the sequel looks like it'll be even better. Get ready for a visceral sci-fi FPS with the most impressive game engine and random battles ever seen on PC ☐

1 **PLAYSTATION PORTABLE** Sony's revolutionary handheld has Nintendo quaking in its boots. Just look at the potential of the machine and try telling us you're not excited

## 27 KILLER 7

**Capcom's Killer 7 looks like being an adult treat for GameCube owners.**

The cel-shaded graphics are certainly distinctive, and there's a great game twist with the lead character Harman Smith, an assassin with seven split personalities. Utilising the different skills of each personality is the key to mastering the game as you tackle a violent underworld that is terrorising the globe.

## 10

E3 Every May the American trade show E3 is a gamer's wet dream, featuring hundreds of playable games, many seen for the first time and loads of new announcements. This year Sony is set to dominate with emphasis on the PSP, giving the handheld its first official unveiling. Nintendo is also blowing its trumpet about a new piece of hardware it will reveal at the show, although it's quick to dispel rumours that it's a successor to the GameCube or GBA...

## 18

## RISE TO HONOR

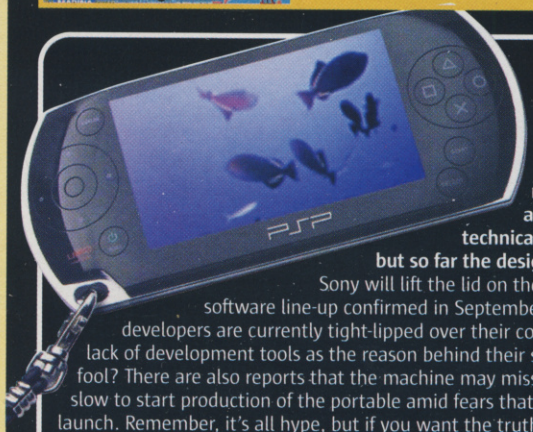
Inspired by the Hong Kong action movie genre, Rise To Honor is a Sony exclusive starring the greatest martial arts actor around, Jet Li. The action utilises a 360° combat system that recreates Li's signature moves, allowing you to battle multiple foes. Jet Li not only provides the motion capture, he also carried out voiceover duties and contributed creative ideas to the game.

## TOP TEN HIDDEN GEMS OF 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| 7 | THE MOVIES |
| 25 | THE WARRIORS |
| 28 | FORBIDDEN SIREN |
| 44 | BREAKDOWN |
| 54 | NINA |
| 64 | KAENA |
| 70 | SWORD OF MANA |
| 75 | THE INCREDIBLES |
| 78 | TRIBES: VENGEANCE |
| 85 | KATAMARI DAMASHII |

## 6 GTA SEQUEL

What can we tell you about the next instalment in the GTA series? Unfortunately, not a great deal. There are a million rumours doing the rounds on the Internet as to what might be in the game, but only two concrete facts: it's out before Christmas 2004 and it's not GTA IV but another spin-off like Vice City. The smart money claims it's going to be set in the city of San Andreas, one of the area names along with Liberty City and Vice City in the original GTA. It's a logical argument – we'll just have to wait and see if it pans out. Remember, as soon as we know we'll print it here.




## 1 PSP

**Sony's handheld is set to revolutionise portable gaming. We've already been swamped under by technical details and specs for the machine, but so far the design and software remain a mystery.**

Sony will lift the lid on their great gaming secret at E3, with the software line-up confirmed in September at the Tokyo Game Show. Third-party developers are currently tight-lipped over their commitment to the machine, citing the lack of development tools as the reason behind their silence. But who are they trying to fool? There are also reports that the machine may miss the 2004 release date, with Sony slow to start production of the portable amid fears that there won't be enough stock to launch. Remember, it's all hype, but if you want the truth make sure you stick with CVG throughout 2004, we'll bring you all the major news first.

■ NO NEXT-GEN CONSOLES WILL LAUNCH IN 2004 BUT EXPECT TECH DEMOS TO SURFACE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR ■ THE NEXT TONY HAWK TITLE WILL FEATURE GREATER INVOLVEMENT FROM THE JACKASS CREW

# Big In Japan

THIS MONTH PLANET CVG MEETS THE COOLEST LITTLE PEOPLE ON THE PLANET

"Get away from her, you bitch!" says Sigourney to the alien queen. "Rargh!" says the queen

"Humans are a crap. We're much better," say the apes, in a special session of the ape council

Heard of Kubricks? They're the coolest Japanese toys around. These collectible figures are just under three inches tall and look like Lego figures.

Unlike Lego though, they're packed wth detail and cool expressions. Kubricks come in many different forms, with figures from major and cult movies, TV shows, videogames, Japanese anime and manga, along with mad designs created by up-and-coming artists.

Check out our wicked Metal Gear Solid guards. One has a little exclamation mark above his head and the other is sleeping and has 'Zzz' written on a transparent piece of plastic attached to his bonce.

They're a major hit due to their diversity and also their super-deformed design. Obviously they're not meant to be realistic; instead they have a distinct style that the Japanese and a growing Western audience love.

One of the reasons why Kubricks are so popular over here and in Japan is that buying one is a complete surprise. The figures are released in sets, but come in small sealed boxes all with the same design. So although you may be buying a a particular set, you don't know what figure will be inside. The rarest might only be found in one in every 196 boxes! With 24 figures in a case this makes some figures highly desirable and pumps up the price of the hard-to-get characters. Just do a search on Ebay to see what we mean.

"Listen, did you hear that?" says Craig. "Not really, I'm sleeping," replies Geoff

There's now a spin-off series of designs called Be@rbricks, all based on a bear shape (duh!), just look at last month's Big In Japan to see a cool Kill Bill Be@rbrick.

## JAPANESE FLAVOURED

It doesn't take a genius to figure out what Japanese gamers like playing on their consoles. Just looking at the Japanese titles that make it to UK shores indicates that RPGs are still the nation's favourite. A recent survey at the Tokyo Game Show scientifically proves just that fact, but also throws light on what they don't like. Over 1,000 game fans were asked what their favourite style of game was and 39% claimed RPGs. However, Western developers wanting to crack the Japanese market may need to change their ways. First-person shooters were favoured by less than one per cent of attendees. So it's unlikely that a Half-Life 2 beater will be coming from Japan anytime soon.

## JAPANESE TOP-SELLING GAMES

- 1. Evangelion 2: Shinseiki Evangelions (PS2) Bandai ..... 140,200 copies
- 2. Pokémon Colosseum (GC) The Pokémon Company ..... 121,900 copies
- 3. Mario & Luigi RPG (GBA) Nintendo ..... 52,400 copies
- 4. Let's Make a Pro Baseball Team 2003 (PS2) Sega ..... 44,600 copies
- 5. Mario Kart Double Dash!! (GC) Nintendo ..... 40,700 copies

## EA NUZZLES UP TO NAMCO

The newly named R: Racing (no 'Evolution' at the end) will be published in the UK by EA, and will hit game stores in March 2004. In case you weren't sure it's basically the next Ridge Racer title, and the series is no longer exclusive just to PS2. It'll be appearing Xbox and GameCube too. Result.

Loads of our games don't work cos they're scratched. Then the other day we got details of a company that fixes scratched CDs and DVDs. It works like this: visit www.scratch-busters.co.uk to order a free postage CD envelope, post it off and it comes back fixed! All for just £3.99 – much cheaper than buying another game!

CVG's very own pimp daddy Alex was on hand to dish out some awards and fashion tips to the scruffy Rockstar bunch

Miles Jacobson picks up the Best Of British award for Champ Manager 4, while Phil Jupitus weighs his right breast

# RESULTS

computer and video games

# GOLDEN JOYSTICK™ AWARDS 2003

IN ASSOCIATION WITH MTV

### RETAILER OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: GAME
■ FINALISTS: AMAZON.CO.UK, GAMEPLAY.COM

### HARDWARE OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: NINTENDO GAME BOY ADVANCE SP
■ FINALISTS: SCEE EYETOY, MICROSOFT XBOX LIVE!

### PS2 GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY (ROCKSTAR)
■ FINALISTS: EYETOY: PLAY (SCEE), ■ PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2 (KONAMI)

### GAMECUBE GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER (NINTENDO)
■ FINALISTS: METROID PRIME (NINTENDO), RESIDENT EVIL ZERO (CAPCOM)

### HANDHELD GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING (NINTENDO)
■ FINALISTS: POKEMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE (NINTENDO), THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST (NINTENDO)

### XBOX GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC (ACTIVISION/LUCASARTS)
■ FINALISTS: SOULCALIBUR II (EA), TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL (UBISOFT)

### PC GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 4 (EIDOS)
■ FINALISTS: GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY (ROCKSTAR), BATTLEFIELD 1942 (ELECTRONIC ARTS)

### ONLINE GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: BATTLEFIELD 1942 (ELECTRONIC ARTS)
■ FINALISTS: PHANTASY STAR ONLINE I & II (SEGA), UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP (ATARI)

## FIND OUT WHO SWIPED THE GOLD, AND WHICH GAMES WERE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD...

CVG's annual awards ceremony kicked off with a hilarious bang, thanks to chubby funster Phil Jupitus who presented the gig. The gags were flying and so were the golden gongs.

It comes as no surprise that Vice City swept the board, winning PS2 and Ultimate Game Of The Year. But it was wicked to see Viewtiful Joe win the new Unsung Hero award, and Miyamoto's acceptance speech was so heartfelt it made many grown men weep into their profiteroles. Anyway, without further ado [drum roll please] the winners are...

### MTV FILM ADAPTATION OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS (ELECTRONIC ARTS)
■ FINALISTS: ENTER THE MATRIX (ATARI), HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE (ELECTRONIC ARTS)

### THE DAILY MIRROR AWARD: BEST OF BRITISH

■ WINNER: CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 4 (EIDOS)
■ FINALISTS: CONFLICT DESERT STORM II (SCI) REPUBLIC: THE REVOLUTION (EIDOS)

### PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: NINTENDO
■ FINALISTS: ELECTRONIC ARTS, ROCKSTAR GAMES

### UNSUNG HERO GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: VIEWTIFUL JOE
■ FINALISTS: NO ONE LIVES FOREVFR 2: A SPY IN H.A.R.M.S WAY, STEEL BATTALION

### HALL OF FAME INDUSTRY PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: SHIGERU MIYAMOTO

### EDITOR'S AWARD: GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (KONAMI)
■ FINALISTS: CALL OF DUTY (ACTIVISION), THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER (NINTENDO)

### MOST WANTED GAME FOR CHRISTMAS

■ WINNER: MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!! (NINTENDO)
■ FINALISTS: PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (KONAMI), WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN (THQ)

### MOST ANTICIPATED GAME FOR 2004

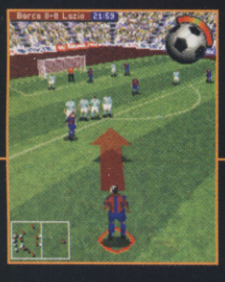
■ WINNER: HALF-LIFE 2 (VU GAMES)
■ FINALISTS: DOOM III (ACTIVISION), HALO 2 (MICROSOFT)

### ULTIMATE GAME OF THE YEAR

■ WINNER: GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY (ROCKSTAR)
■ FINALISTS: THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER (NINTENDO), STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC (ACTIVISION)

This is where
I missed the target.

EA SPORTS FIFA FOOTBALL 2004



FIFA® Football 2004 now on the N-Gage™ game deck. For true football fans who demand official licenses, in-depth game modes, true-to-life game play and wireless multiplayer competition, FIFA Football 2004 delivers an exciting and authentic mobile football challenge. **n-gage.com**

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## PS2 GAMES USED TO MEASURE GLOBE

An astonishing 150 million PS2 games have been sold in Europe since the machine launched. If laid side by side they'd stretch halfway around the world. Impressive, considering if you did the same with all N-Gage games sold they'd only make it halfway round a beanbag.

## PIPSQUEAK PLAYSTATION 2

Sony is expected to reveal a smaller version of the PS2 next May. It makes sense, as the PSone was launched towards the end of the original PlayStation's life, and as PS3 is expected to arrive in 2005/6, the PStwo could mark a goodbye to Sony's second gaming masterpiece.

## THIS MONTH'S BEST RUMOUR

Following the flak N-Gage has received for its nonsense design, word is that Nokia is already in the process of remodelling the machine to make it more user-friendly.

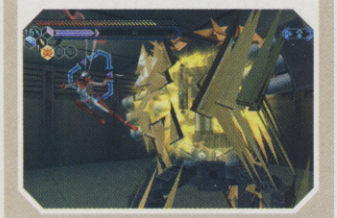
EXCLUSIVE

# DEADLY NIGHTSHADE

**Never-before-seen shots of Sega's Shinobi spin-off Nightshade**

### NAME CHANGE

Sega recently switched the name of the game from Kunoichi to Nightshade. It'll be coming out in the UK in early 2004



### SHADOW DANCER

Surround your enemy with stealth dashes and you'll be able to unleash a ninjitsu move called the Shadow Dance

### SHAZAAM!

Insane combos fill up your Chakra Gauge. When it's full you can perform Ninja magic. Like regular magic, but Ninja-style

*Van the man is packing some mean weapons. These spiky discs look like giant rusty throwing stars*

*Pictured in the days before photography, Van had to pose for three weeks to get this*

# MONSTERS INC.

## THE STARS OF HORROR ARE ALWAYS HUNGRY FOR BLOOD. AND THIS TIME THEY WANT YOURS

**Last month we told you that upcoming Hollywood frightfest Van Helsing is coming to PS2 and Xbox. Now feast your peepers on the first pics of the vamp-slaying biggie in action. Wah, and, indeed, ha ha.**

Nobody knows much about either the movie or the game, but what we have found out... one word sums it up: KEWL!

Why so cool? Cos Dracula has teamed up with some of the most iconic and terrifying monsters ever to grace the silver screen.

Frankenstein and Wolfman are the only two confirmed comrades, but rumour has it that there will be stacks of other famous frighteners making appearances. Your job? Put it this way, the bad guys are having 'stake' for dinner...

The action is set deep within the mountains of Transylvania, where there promises to be loads of creepy Castlevania-style exploration as well as full-blooded monster-mashing encounters.

Van Helsing swoops simultaneously into UK cinemas and game stores on May 7. Stop by next month for the full blood-curdling lowdown on both PS2 and Xbox versions.

First look

*The reason none of the monsters have made it into the screenshots is because many of them are still a secret (or so we're told, anyway)*

*Hugh Jackman trades in his Adamantium claws for a slug-spitting Gatling gun. He plays Van Helsing in the movie, but it's not yet known whether he'll provide the voice in the game*

# BUILD A BADASS SNOWBOARD?

## DON'T LET THIS SLICK SNOWBOARDING BUNDLE SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS

**CVG and Nintendo have shacked up to bring you the ultimate winter warmer.**

One jammy winner will walk away with a GameCube and 1080° Avalanche, with two runners-up each bagging a copy of the game.

But we're not just giving them away willy-nilly. Hell no! In the true spirit of extreme sports you're going to have to work your rocks off for these ice-cool rewards.

***We want you to build a mini-snowboard out of whatever you've got lying around the house and paint a custom Nintendo-themed design on the underside.***

The main prize will go to the best, most original and finely crafted mini snowboard

### MY SNOWBOARD ROCKS!

Make sure you fill in and send us this coupon with your snowboard or you won't be eligible to win, no matter how brilliant your creation is.

★NAME .....

★AGE .....

★HOME ADDRESS .....

★TELEPHONE NUMBER .....

★EMAIL .....

Send your mini snowboards and entry coupons to: My Snowboard Rocks! CVG, 9 Dallington Street, London, EC1V 0BQ (deadline for entries January 14)

## DEUS EX GETS AHEAD OF ITSELF

Deus Ex Invisible War is yet to wow the world on PC and Xbox, but a sequel is already a dead cert. At a recent press event in London developer Ion Storm's head honcho Warren Spector confirmed that work has begun on the third game in the series. We'll bring you all the latest as it breaks.

## SIREN SETS OFF ALARMS

Japanese TV ads for Sony's next major survival horror adventure Forbidden Siren have had kiddies crapping themselves with fear. In fact, the advert has been considered so disturbing that its been yanked off the air. We'll be able to experience the full horror of the game when it reaches UK soil next year.

## BARGAIN OF THE MONTH

You can pick up a GameCube plus three Star Wars games for under £100 from GAME's online store at shop.game.net. You get Rogue Squadron II, Clone Wars and Bounty Hunter in the bundle.

# ZELDA FREEBIE WILL COST YOU THE STARS

## 4500 TO BE PRECISE. WHY DON'T YOU CHUCK THE MOON IN WHILE YOU'RE AT IT!

**Buy Nintendo's Mario Kart: Double Dash!! GameCube bundle and you get a special Zelda Collectors' Edition Bonus disc for free, featuring Majora's Mask, Ocarina Of Time, Link's Adventure, the original NES game and a Wind Waker demo.**

So, what do you do if you already own a Cube and just want the Zelda disc? Okay, this is how it is. It's not available in the shops! The only way to get hold of a copy (other than buying one on eBay) is by ordering a copy from Nintendo's Star Catalogue, which will cost you 4500 stars.

You have to become a VIP 24:7 member online to be eligible. Plus, as you only get 250 stars for every new game that you register online, you'd have to buy – wait for it – *18 games* to earn enough stars. That's a whopping £720 worth of games.

However, you do get five stars for every day you visit the site. So going on that basis it would only take 900 days, or just under three years to save up enough stars. Hmm, by then we'll all be whizzing around in hovercars and watching telly in 4D.

# GONNA GET DIRTY!

## GAMING'S OLDEST SEX ADDICT IS BACK IN ACTION

**Leisure Suit Larry started chasing ass back in 1987, but soon slinked off into obscurity.**

Now the filthy midget is planning to go back on the prowl in Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude on all formats at the tail end of 2004.

# NEW AND USED CARS

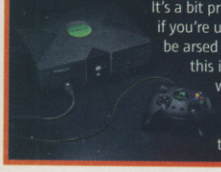
## MORE WEIRD & WONDERFUL MOTORS FROM GT4

# IT'S GOOD TO PLAY TOGETHER

## Getting online with Xbox Live couldn't be easier

**It's all a bit of a headache. Broadband, online gaming. If you're coming to it fresh there's no simple one-stop-shop solution. Or at least there hasn't been until now.**

Freedom2Surf has just launched the first complete Xbox online gaming package. It sorts you out with everything you need. You get an Xbox, broadband connection, plus copies of Halo and Midtown Madness 3 all for £257.24. But of course you have to pay a monthly fee: £22.50 if you go for a 512k connection.



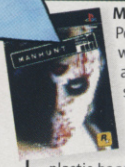
It's a bit pricey, and there are better deals out there if you're up for trawling the Net. But if you can't be arsed and just want to get online sharpish this is a pretty good way to go about it. Visit www.freedom2surf.net/adsl/xbox.php if you're interested in getting hooked up.

No news of any PS2 bundles yet though. We'll keep you posted.

# Playtime Bullies

## FIGHTING FOR SPACE ON THE OFFICE CONSOLE THIS MONTH

### PS2 MOST PLAYED!



**MANHUNT**

Pete now sleeps with the light on, and Alex can't go shopping at Tesco without getting freaked out by all the plastic bags. Rockstar's thriller has turned us all into bed-wetting wrecks. Except for our Lee. Poor fella poops the bed. Eeek!

### XBOX MOST PLAYED!

**NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND**

We like our racing cars like our women: lowered skirts and big bumpers. NFS Underground is every boy racer's wet dream come true. You can't help but get off on the hardcore arcade action and doing up your motor.

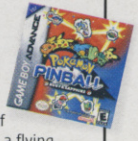
### CUBE MOST PLAYED!

**1080° AVALANCHE**

Mike goes on about what an great boarder he is. But if his 1080° skills are anything to go by we reckon he gets about as much respect on the slopes as those German skiers in skin-tight duds. We've made him look like a wiener this month.

### GBA MOST PLAYED!

**POKÉMON PINBALL**



Since copies arrived at CVG headquarters we're all about the pinball. Half of us don't give a flying Pikachu about Pokémon, but the fast-twitch ball-flipping action is so addictive and rewarding that it doesn't matter.

### PC MOST PLAYED!

**MAX PAYNE 2**

The baron of bullet-time is back, moving even more slowly. Pull the trigger in slow-mo mode and there's enough time to run off and knock one out before the bullet leaves your gun. Handy, considering the game's even shorter. Still ace, though.

# It is the 41st Millennium.

## There is only War.

## You are Kais, a Fire Warrior.

## Fight to Survive the next 24 hours.

## 'Who needs Halo?' - 91% Play magazine

WARHAMMER 40,000

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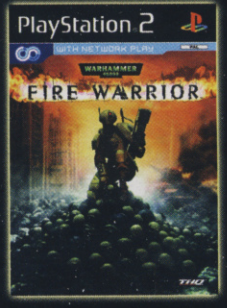


PlayStation.2 NETWORK ENTERTAINMENT

THQ

GWI GAMES WORKSHOP INTERACTIVE

POWERED BY gamespy

Kuju

PC CD ROM

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## Read the awesome Fire Warrior novelisation from the Black Library, in all good bookshops!

## SLIPPAGE REALITY

Atari has confirmed that Unreal Tournament 2004 for PC won't be coming out at the end of this year. Frag fetishists will have to wait until early February to get hands on with the radically updated shooter, which introduces vehicles into the UT universe.

## SEGA SCRUBS VECTORMAN

Oddball hero Vectorman first appeared way back on Mega Drive, and Sega was hoping to revive him for a 2004 release on PS2. However, news has surfaced that Vectorman is no more! He's been scrapped – in favour of more dull Sonic spin-offs no doubt.

UPDATE!

OUT MARCH 2004 ON PS2 AND XBOX

# DRIVER 3

## PICTURE PILE-UP!

MORE INCREDIBLE SHOTS OF THE GAME THAT COULD HAVE VICE CITY BEGGING FOR MERCY

INSANE PLATFORMER!

# EIGHT THINGS TO DO WITH A BUNNY*

## DON'T CALL THE RSPCA, IT'S CONSENSUAL ABUSE!

**Spanx and Redmond are the stars of Whiplash, a berserk new action platformer.**

When dipped in hazardous materials Redmond becomes a multi-purpose object which Spanx can then use to carry out extraordinary feats. They mostly involve Redmond getting hurt, but we're told he's okay with it.

Whiplash bursts onto PS2 and Xbox on 13 February 2004. But before it does, check out some of Redmond's uncanny abilities.

### 1. FLAMING FUR BALL

Years of testing have made Redmond immune to serious damage. Light him up and watch your enemies flee!

### 2. HARE-SICLE

This frosty attack lets you freeze enemies solid, giving you plenty of time to make your getaway.

### 3. RADIOACTIVE RABBIT

This nasty attack poisons foes and turns them into toxic relay runners, infecting everyone in their radius.

### 4. ELECTRO-STATIC RABBIT

Give 'em the shock treatment! This 'zap attack' has the bonus of chaining automatically between all enemies or destructible elements in its path.

### 5. HELIUM BUNNY

Turns Redmond into a hot air balloon, letting you float to places you can't reach. Careful. Redmond will pop (like a balloon!) if he bumps into anything.

### 6. HARE CLOG

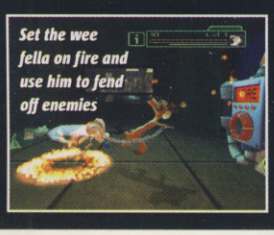
Clog a toilet with Redmond creating a foul flood to ward off enemies.

### 7. TOXIC BUNNY

Marinate Redmond in toxic waste to poison your foes.

### 8. HELICOPTER HARE

Utilise Redmond to chain-whip attackers, as a grappling hook to swing over hazards, or to helicopter to areas unreachable by foot.




* Harming rabbits, though fun (we imagine), is barbaric and against the law

# the HOT SEAT

**Ion Storm's studio director Warren Spector talks to CVG about the nature of reality, killing Half-Life 2's creator, oh, and Deus Ex**

**CVG:** Is it fair to say that in Invisible War, the emphasis is on what's fun rather than what's realistic?

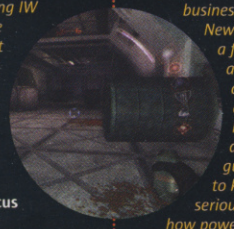
**Spector:** *There have been points where I've been tarred with the 'guy making realistic games' brush and I hate the word 'realism'. The word I always use at the office is 'believable'; we create believable worlds so we always have a fictional justification for 'why isn't anybody scared that you're carrying a gun?' We need a believable explanation for everything that's happening in the game but reality is not the issue.*

**CVG:** Why isn't the game totally freeform?

**Spector:** *We want to be able to collaborate with players – we're better storytellers than most players are, and we want to find ways for them to explore and experiment and interact with us as they play. We're always controlling their experience so that we keep them moving in the right direction for the storyline.*

**CVG:** You're already thinking about Deus Ex 3, but why isn't IW on PS2?

**Spector:** *Getting IW to run on the PS2 – we just can't do it, but we have very interesting plans for the Deus Ex universe and the PS2...*



**CVG:** What's the main focus for Invisible War?

**Spector:** *The first Deus Ex game was this stew, we just threw everything in there because we had no idea what Deus Ex gameplay was all about. This time we understand what Deus Ex gameplay is. This was about focusing the game down to the essence of Deus Ex.*

**CVG:** Does Invisible War contain some sort of socio-political commentary?

**Spector:** *There's the potential for the world to get pretty darn grim. I was in New York on September 11 – that was not a fun time. In the US we have a President with whom I disagree profoundly. One of the big things that games can do that other media can't is allow people to experience things and try to change things for themselves instead of listening to commentators talking. We had to sugar-coat it a bit, but every game makes an ideological statement whether or not people are aware of it and we just wear our ideology a little more on our sleeve.*

**CVG:** What was the single biggest challenge when you were making Invisible War?

**Spector:** *For me it was probably letting the team go and make the game. My role has changed – Harvey Smith was the project director on this one. For the team, it'd have to be mastering the new technology. I think we probably got to half of what our technology is capable of doing, still I think Invisible War's the best-looking Xbox game out there.*

**"WE GOT ABOUT HALF WHAT OUR TECH IS CAPABLE OF. STILL, IT'S THE BEST-LOOKING XBOX GAME OUT"**

**CVG:** Last question. In your expert opinion, what's the next big leap forward for videogames?

**Spector:** *More character emotion. There are two university researchers, Paul Ekman and a guy at NYU, who are working on virtual actor technology, and they can get more emotion out of a stick figure than any game you have ever seen. Paul Ekman has mapped all the muscles in the face and how they're used to express different emotions and I wanted to be the first person in the game business to use it. Gabe Newell (of Valve) is a friend of mine and I went to E3 and to his demo of Half-Life 2 and he starts talking about these guys... I wanted to kill him! But seriously, think about how powerful it's going to be when we have these facially expressive characters in the context of a game where you can look at somebody and say 'I just made that person happy' or 'I scared that person'. It ties right in with our core gameplay.*

## THE MATRIX ONLINE

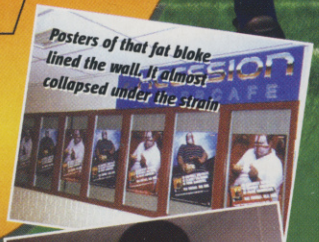
UPDATE!

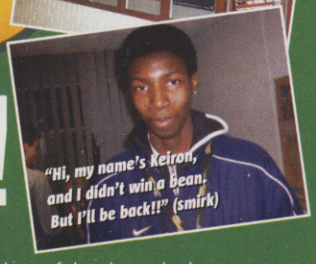
Check out this fresh batch of screenshots of The Matrix Online in action. It's currently planned to hit PC some time in 2004. Think Star Wars Galaxies meets Enter The Matrix and you get the picture. Expect all sorts of levelling up and impossible kung fu kick-flippery.

nationalleague

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3

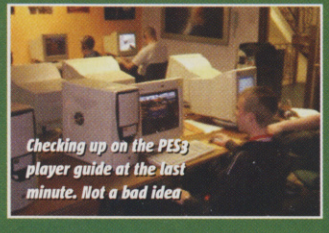
GAME | computer and video games | KONAMI




# IT'S ALL KICKING OFF!

## FIRST EVER NATIONAL PRO EVO LEAGUE BEGINS




**The first round of games in the UK PES3 National League were played in November, with hundreds of matches played at iGames venues in London (Harrow and Chingford), Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Southend and Stevenage.**

PES fans qualified for the official league, which is being run by CVG in conjunction with Konami, by playing the PES3 demo available at GAME stores and submitting their highest score.

Each regional league has hundreds of players, but the competitors play just 20 games over the season (opponents are chosen at random), with a maximum of seven matches each on any of the eight match days.

The top four in each of the leagues at the end of the season in June will be taken, all expenses paid, to a grand final with huge prizes up for grabs. The official champion will also go on to represent the UK in the 2004 PES3 European Championships in Switzerland. Cool!

It's obviously a bit early to pick out any potential winners, but competition is definitely tough! Just three of the players had 100 per cent records after competing in the first round of matches – 19-year-old Khalid El-awel (in the Harrow league), Stuart Cronin (16, Edinburgh) and Shui Ip (23, Liverpool). The biggest win so far was Richard Marsh's 9-0 trashing of Phil Friel at Birmingham. Not bad for a ten-minute game!

We'll be following the PES3 National League in CVG over coming months, but you can keep fully up to date with results, reports, photos and more at www.pesleague.co.uk.

Player registration is now closed, but if more league places become available details will be posted on the website. So if you're not already in the league, keep an eye on it!

## CVG CHAMP WINS MEDIA CUP

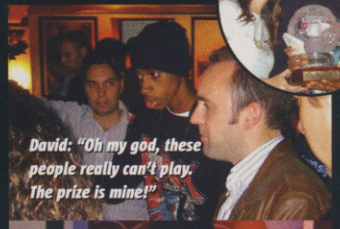
**David Sefah, winner of last year's CVG-sponsored UK PES2 Championship, warmed up for the National League by lifting Konami's PES3 Media Cup.**

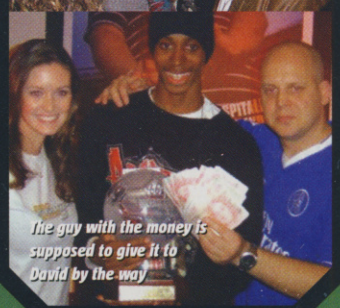
The 16-year-old was given a special wildcard entry into the annual trade-only event against 100 journalists, PR and marketing types and industry liggers.

After an unconvincing start in the group stages, the Londoner really got going in the second round, coming back from behind to win 4-1 against the 2002 Media Cup winner. David had a man sent off after six minutes in the final, and suffered cramp in his hand throughout the game, but he still managed to beat a PlayStation mag editor 5-2. Easy! Easy!

"It was a difficult final – it took a lot of mental strength," said a modest David, after the game. "But it's given me a real confidence boost for the PES3 National League."

David has yet to start his season, but will be appearing in the Chingford league.



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# Charts

FIND OUT WHICH GAMES ARE FLYING OFF THE SHELVES AND INTO YOUR CONSOLES, HOW THEY SCORED IN CVG AND WHAT THEY'RE ALL ABOUT. YOU LOT SURE ARE LUCKY!

## UK TOP 20 BESTSELLERS

ChartTrack

The official UK weekly leisure software charts ©2002 ELSPA Ltd, compiled by ChartTrack, with the name ELSPA acting as a link to our website www.elspa.com

| POSITION | MOVE | GAME | FORMAT/S | CVG SCORE | SUMMARY | LAST WEEK | WEEKS IN CHART |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | - | FIFA 2004 (EA) | PS2 XB PC PSONE | 8 | EA's footie franchise boots Pro Evo 3 down the table into tenth place. There's something wrong in the world... | - | 4 |
| 2 | ↑ | TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA (ACTIVISION) | PS2 XB | 8 | Nick Kang hits a brick wall in his battle for the number one slot – in the form of Ronaldhino's front teeth. | 3 | 2 |
| 3 | NEW | MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!! (NINTENDO) | GC | 9 | Forget nitros. All you need do is feast on a few special mushrooms and you'll be tearing up the tarmac. | - | 1 |
| 4 | NEW | LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING (EA) | PS2 GC XB PC | 7 | Worth a look if you haven't already spent your cash on rubber hobbit feet, plastic figurines, maps of Mordor, etc... | - | 1 |
| 5 | ↓ | WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN (THQ) | PS2 | 9 | Not everyone's into grappling with sweaty men. So luckily you can play as the girls of the WWE this time. | 2 | 2 |
| 6 | ↓ | THE SIMPSONS: HIT AND RUN (VIVENDI) | PS2 GC PC | 7 | Homer makes like Tommy Vercetti and unleashes hell on Springfield in this GTA-style take on The Simpsons' universe. | 4 | 3 |
| 7 | ↓ | FINDING NEMO (THQ) | PS2 XB GBA PC | - | The movie's okay, but unless you're just out of nappies avoid the games like a nasty case of the trots. | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | ↑ | HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP (EA) | PS2 GC XB PC | 7 | EA is famed for sports games, and proves that it can pull off fantastical as well as factual. But it's not in-depth enough. | 19 | 2 |
| 9 | ↓ | SSX 3 (EA) | PS2 XB GC | 8 | Carve it up to the sounds of N.E.R.D and Queens Of The Stone Age. SSX 3 is the coolest arcade boarder ever. | 5 | 3 |
| 10 | ↓ | PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (KONAMI) | PS2 | 10 | None of us won the PES3 Media Cup. That's why we hate it now. We love FIFA more. Only joking, we'll never turn... | 7 | 5 |
| 11 | ↓ | THE SIMS: MAKIN' MAGIC (EA) | PC | - | Sadly our dream of a compendium of David Blaine mini-games didn't come true. Instead we get this... | 8 | 3 |
| 12 | - | DANCE: UK (BIG BEN) | PS2 PSONE | - | All other dance games only have four pressure pads to worry about, but Dance UK has eight! | 12 | 4 |
| 13 | ↓ | CALL OF DUTY (ACTIVISION) | PC | 9 | Loads of Medal Of Honor guys formed their own company, Infinity Ward, and its first offering blows MOH away. | 9 | 2 |
| 14 | ↓ | TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 (EA) | PS2 GC XB PC | 8 | He gets paid gazillions to smack a pimply little ball into a hole, and now he's got the best golf game ever to his name. | 10 | 8 |
| 15 | ↓ | EYETOY: PLAY (SONY) | PS2 | - | Look into my eyes... you're feeling sleepy... you're losing your inhibitions... you're making a fool of yourself... | 11 | 20 |
| 16 | NEW | POP IDOL (CODEMASTERS) | PS2 GBA PC | 4 | The equivalent of that guy who sang Eye Of The Tiger in the TV auditions. Entertaining, but only for about five seconds. | - | 1 |
| 17 | ↓ | TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3 (UBISOFT) | XB | 8 | Seen the advert of the loser bawling when his online buddy dies. Do you want to end up sad and lonely? Sign here. | 15 | 2 |
| 18 | ↓ | HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS (EA) | PS2 GBA PC PSONE | 7 | If you really must play a Potter game get this one and not the ghastly Philosopher's Stone remake. | 16 | 45 |
| 19 | ↑ | CRASH BANDICOOT: WRATH OF CORTEX – PLATINUM (VIVENDI) | PS2 XB | 7 | The chirpy ginger rodent is a fave with the ladies, but that's not their fault. They don't know any better. | - | 37 |
| 20 | NEW | NORTON INTERNET SECURITY 2004 | PC | - | The most amazing point-and-click virus-bashing adventure ever. Bug stomping is rarely this satisfying or addictive. | - | 1 |


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## CVG MOST WANTED

**THE SIMS 2 (PC)**

**Graeme:** "Kids that look like you and Sims that get old, stumble around and gently wet themselves. If it had tanks and racing cars it'd be better than real life."

**BREAKDOWN (XB)**

**Mike:** "First-person fisticuffs and gun 'n' run fun exclusively for Xbox. It's breaking the mould and could easily be one of the freshest games of 2004."

**HALF-LIFE 2 (PC, XB)**

**Pete:** "The shooter to end all shooters has been hit by the delay to end all delays. Enough to make you put a bullet in the hacker who's to blame." [*Steady on there, Pete*]

**FINAL FANTASY X-2 (PS2)**

**Lee:** "Lovely ladies, monster thrashing battles and a mission-based structure? A departure from the Final Fantasy norm but it should rock hard."

**TRANSFORMERS ARMADA (PS2)**

**Alex:** "Gimme Transformers and gimme it now! Sounds like a kid's game but the graphics are sweet as and the action's so hot the pad'll melt in your palms!"

## READER'S MOST WANTED

Hayley Compton is the first girl to write in for Reader's Most Wanted, so without further ado here are her upcoming faves...

**1. DRIVER 3 (PS2)**
"I probably won't sleep for a week when this comes out."

**2. RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK (PS2)**
"Don't really care about the online stuff, I just adore the single-player adventures. I've completed all of them up till now."

**3. PERFECT DARK (XB)**
"I love my Xbox, but one of the main reasons I got one was to play the new Perfect Dark game. So where is it?!"

**4. THE SIMS 2 (PC)**
None of my mates play games, except for The Sims. We're all excited about the sequel. The graphics are amazing."

**5. ALIAS (XB)**
"It's one of my favourite TV shows along with Buffy. If it's good I'll be in heaven."

Send CVG a photo of yourself and list of five games you're most excited about, plus 10 words on each telling us why. **Reader's Most Wanted, CVG, Dennis Publishing Ltd, 9 Dallington Street, London EC1V 0BQ. Email: mailbag.cvg @dennis.co.uk (subject: Reader's Most Wanted)**

## NEXT SILENT HILL NAMED

Konami's fourth spine-chilling sickener is set to be called Silent Hill: The Room. Hell only knows what unthinkable nightmares await us in The Room, but you're guaranteed to get news on every loathsome revelation here in Planet CVG throughout the whole of 2004.

## AND THE BEAT GOES ON

Donkey Konga for GameCube is yet to be released, but Nintendo already has plans for a sequel. Clearly the Japanese giant is confident that the first game will have us going bananas for bongo. Looks a bit like a one-trick monkey to us. Stop by next month for CVG's first verdict.

## HANDHELD LUGGAGE

You no longer have to use an old sock to protect your GBA SP, or worse one of those pikey plastic cases you get in Dixons. Nintendo has released the Louis Vuitton of handheld carriers in the form of this special leather Mulberry case. Many celebrities were spotted with it at London Fashion Week. Problem is, you pay the price for being in the fashion elite. Forty-nine smackers to be precise! We'll stick with our old sock thanks.

CUT OUT AND KEEP

# RELEASE DATES

**CVG BRINGS YOU THE ULTIMATE CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP RELEASE SCHEDULE. MARK UP YOUR FAVES AND KEEP THIS LIST ON YOU AT ALL TIMES...**

### DECEMBER 2003

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| PS2 | THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT | DECEMBER 19 | |
| GC | THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT | DECEMBER 19 | ☐ |
| XB | THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT | DECEMBER 19 | ☐ |
| GC | JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH | DECEMBER 19 | ☐ |

### JANUARY 2004

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| GBA | NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND | JANUARY 09 | ☐ |
| PC | RAINBOW SIX 3: ATHENA SWORD | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| PS2 | MAFIA | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| XB | MAFIA | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| PS2 | CONAN | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| XB | CONAN | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| PC | CONAN | JANUARY 16 | ☐ |
| GC | CONFLICT DESERT STORM II | JANUARY 23 | ☐ |
| XB | NHL RIVALS 2004 | JANUARY 23 | ☐ |
| PC | SIM CITY 4 DELUXE | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| PS2 | LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| GBA | LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| PS2 | NFL STREET | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| XB | NFL STREET | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| PS2 | ARC: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| XB | DRAGON'S LAIR 3D | JANUARY 30 | ☐ |
| PS2 | MX UNLEASHED | JANUARY | ☐ |
| XB | MX UNLEASHED | JANUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | WRATH | JANUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | CHAIN GANG | JANUARY | ☐ |
| GC | MERCEDES-BENZ WORLD RACING | JANUARY | ☐ |

### FEBRUARY 2004

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| XB | RUN LIKE HELL | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| GBA | BARBARIAN | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| GC | CONAN | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | SONIC HEROES | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | FIGHT BOX | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | ROGUE OPS | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| GC | ROGUE OPS | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| XB | ROGUE OPS | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| XB | UNREAL II: THE AWAKENING | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | R-TYPE FINAL | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PC | X2: THE THREAT | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | STARCRAFT: GHOST | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| GC | GOTCHA FORCE | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PS2 | THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS | FEBRUARY 06 | ☐ |
| PC | CHICAGO 1930 | FEBRUARY 07 | ☐ |
| XB | GALLEON: ISLANDS OF MYSTERY | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | MAXIMO VS THE ARMY OF ZIN | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| XB | URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| GC | URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | KYA: DARK LINEAGE | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | CASTLEVANIA | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | SPY HUNTER 2 | FEBRUARY 13 | ☐ |
| PS2 | WHIPLASH | FEBRUARY 16 | ☐ |
| XB | WHIPLASH | FEBRUARY 16 | ☐ |
| PC | NEIGHBOURS FROM HELL 2 | FEBRUARY 20 | ☐ |
| PS2 | CY GIRLS | FEBRUARY 20 | ☐ |
| PC | SOLDNER SECRETS OF WARS | FEBRUARY 27 | ☐ |
| PC | THE SIMS 2 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| GC | PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE III: C.A.R.D REVOLUTION | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | HEADHUNTER 2: REDEMPTION | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | KILL.SWITCH | FEBRUARY | ☐ |

"It's not for everyone, but Bustin' Out is a fine attempt to properly present The Sims to the console generation..."

"Right now we suspect SOCOM II, like the first one, is going to be a far better online experience than on your own..."

## HOT PICKS

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE SIZZLING NEWCOMERS IN YOUR LOCAL GAMES SHACK**

"The tone is darker than previous games and the missions more linear than the likes of GTA, but across a larger area"

"Omega Strain is shaping up to be the most realistic Syphon Filter game to date, as well as the best looking"

"If half what we know about gets into the finished game, this is going to rocket straight into the PC Hall Of Fame"

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| XB | KILL.SWITCH | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | KILL.SWITCH | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | MEGAMAN X7 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | TEAM SABRE | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | SPHYNX AND THE CURSED MUMMY | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| GC | SPHYNX AND THE CURSED MUMMY | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | SPHYNX AND THE CURSED MUMMY | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | SACRED | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| GC | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| GBA | YU GI OH! POWER OF CHAOS 2 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | ARMED AND DANGEROUS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | ARMED AND DANGEROUS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | BC | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | CRICKET 2004 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | FINAL FANTASY X-2 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | SONIC DX | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | FORBIDDEN SIREN | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | LETHAL SKIES 2 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE 2 | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | ALIAS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | ALIAS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PC | ALIAS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | KAAN: BARBARIAN'S BLADE | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| XB | ARX FATALIS | FEBRUARY | ☐ |
| PS2 | SAVAGE SKIES | FEBRUARY | ☐ |

### MARCH 2004

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| PC | BATTLEFIELD VIETNAM | MARCH 01 | ☐ |
| PC | AGAINST ROME | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PC | EUROPA 1400 GOLD | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PC | ITCH | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PS2 | X-MEN LEGENDS | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PS2 | GRADIUS V | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PS2 | JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| XB | JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| GC | JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PS2 | I-NINJA | MARCH 05 | ☐ |
| PS2 | SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS | MARCH 12 | ☐ |
| PS2 | DRIVER 3 | MARCH 14 | ☐ |
| XB | CURSE: THE EYE OF ISIS | MARCH 26 | ☐ |
| PS2 | IRON STORM | MARCH 26 | ☐ |
| PC | MEDAL OF HONOR: PACIFIC ASSAULT | MARCH | ☐ |
| XB | SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW | MARCH | ☐ |
| PC | JOINT OPERATIONS | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | SYPHON FILTER OMEGA STRAIN | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | THE MUMMY | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU | MARCH | ☐ |
| GBA | TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU | MARCH | ☐ |
| GC | TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU | MARCH | ☐ |
| GBA | BROTHER BEAR | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | DEF JAM 2 | MARCH | ☐ |
| XB | DEF JAM 2 | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | RETRO STRIKE | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | LMA MANAGER 2004 | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | GHOST MASTER | MARCH | ☐ |
| PS2 | SYPHON FILTER OMEGA STRAIN | MARCH | ☐ |

### APRIL 2004

| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| PS2 | GRAN TURISMO 4 | APRIL 04 | ☐ |
| XB | AQUANOX | APRIL 04 | ☐ |
| PS2 | RICHARD BURNS RALLY | APRIL 06 | ☐ |
| XB | RICHARD BURNS RALLY | APRIL 09 | ☐ |
| PS2 | MCFARLANE'S EVIL PROPHECY | APRIL | ☐ |

### MAY 2004

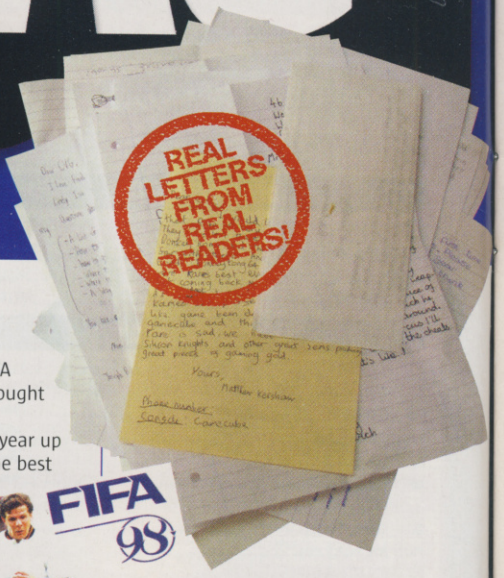
| | | | I WANT IT |
|---|---|---|---|
| PS2 | SPIDER-MAN 2 | MAY 07 | ☐ |
| XB | SPIDER-MAN 2 | MAY 07 | ☐ |
| GC | METAL GEAR SOLID: TWIN SNAKES | MAY | ☐ |
| PS2 | SHREK 2 | MAY | ☐ |

RELEASE DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

*Email is bollocks. You can't get any cack viruses off a good ol' letter. Except maybe Anthrax*

# MAILBAG

Send your rantings and ravings (or a letter) to: Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 9 Dallington Street, London EC1V 0BQ. Or email us at mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk




## DON'T TAKE THAT

The gameplay in Vice City is superb, but for me the music makes it what it is. I couldn't imagine doing a drive-by without listening to Flock Of Seagulls or a bank job without a bit of Wang Chung. I hope Rockstar realises how important this element of the game was and carry it on in the next game (including commercials). Maybe the Nineties, but please: no Take That.

**Andy, Stockport**

*GTA. Drive-by. Take That. Hmm, there's an idea for RockStar*

## SUBLIMINAL CRIMINAL

Have you noticed the Viewtiful Joe shark boss spits out GameCubes and other rubbish? GameCubes are not rubbish! What is Capcom saying? I think the game is brilliant anyway!

**Craig, Crewe**

**games** *Are you suggesting persons unknown are trying to influence you subliminally? We're SHOCKED.*

## TRI-FORCED FEEDBACK

Did anyone notice that in Issue 265, page 99 (Tron 2.0 review), there's a character holding a disc with a Zelda Tri-Force logo? Perhaps Link has changed his look and left Hyrule to earn a bit more money.

**Lance, Liverpool**

## TAKING THE BISCUIT

I love your mag and all, but since I've been writing to your brilliant mag my friends keep calling me Michael Stoke-on-Trent. They accuse me of being a secret agent and prod me to sing 'Goldfinger'. So here's hoping you will write my full name.

**Michael Deakin not Stoke, Stoke-on-Trent**

**games** *We sympathise but we can't help your twat mates. We suggest you change your name by deed poll to something different. Or purely random like, say, Michael CVG Lard Log.*

*Someone's messing with your brain*

## FIFA-FUL FOR THE FUTURE

I have been a huge fan of FIFA games since the first one I bought back in 1996. Each game significantly improved every year up to FIFA '98, which is by far the best FIFA game out on any console now. Since then, each game has got worse by far. Every year they say it is by far the best with loads of new features, but all I see different is the graphics. And I don't see the point in buying every FIFA game every year for £40 – it's a waste of time when you can get FIFA '98 on eBay for a fiver and six years on it still rocks.

**Nathanial, Lancashire**

*FIFA '98: is this as good as the series will ever get?*

## OWN GOAL

How is it that you didn't notice the problem of the frame rate drop in PES3? Mine actually stops for a split second, then speeds up to catch up. This is the second copy I've had and both have done it. I subscribe to your magazine, so I checked others in the shops and they give the game maximum marks too. None have noticed this major error. Do you all get different copies to review than public get to buy?

**Andrew, Lincoln**

**games** *According to Konami, this is an issue related to PS2 hardware – if you own one of the older models, the disc access is slower than newer ones. It wasn't a problem when the game went through Sony's rigorous testing system. We do get different code for reviews, but we've also been playing boxed copies same as you and haven't had any problems, even on our older regular PS2s. It's still no excuse though.*

*Let's get back to the real question: is Gamezville wack?*

## TEE VEE GEE

Firstly, let me just say what a great job you guys are doing on the mag. I read my mate's copy of another games magazine the other day and it just doesn't compare. But let me get to the point. Regardless of how 'wack' it is, I watch Gamezville every day for its whole hour (yes!) of gaming goodness. Yeah, the reviews are sometimes a bit naff and it doesn't have the expert knowledge of CVG, but its still a great show.

Anyway, my question (**Thank God**) is: did G-Team member Matt Cuttle ever work for CVG? It's been nagging my brain for ages now, I know I've seen him before and I'm 80% sure it was in CVG, but that other 20% forced me to write this e-mail and find out once and for all.

**DJM, Stoke on Trent**

**games** *Not that we remember, but CVG mag has been around so long (21 years!) that we're not immune to the occasional dose of memory incontinence. But we can tell you what story was on Page 19 of Issue 23. It was... oh.*

## AMAZING

Hihihihibye

**games** *Fascinating. Especially the last three letters.*

## ASTOUNDING

Why do you think Tomb Raider is so bad? Open your eyes CVG! It's GREAT!!!!!!

**games** *So, our 7/10 score registers as bad in your raggedy brain then, does it?*

*Look, shiiiny, plays PES3. Now just £150*

## CRAP, ACTUALLY

You might have received two emails from tiff[redacted].com They had no name. They were mine.

**Tiff, via email**

CVG *Four emails in a row in fact, Tiff. From you, you say? Woah, what a surprise. But we printed most of them anyway, 'cos for some reason you reminded us of sassy Martine McClutchmyhandbag. Religious nuts keep finding the face or name of God hidden in the mysterious places – on billboards advertising spaghetti or inside newly-sliced pomegranates. Here at CVG, it's Martine's face everywhere. Weird.*

*Martine's face is even on album covers. Uncanny*

## MY, WHAT A WHOPPER

I have a 2.6GHz computer with a 256mb ATI Radeon graphics card. Will LOTR Return Of The King be better on the PC than on a console?

**Matt, via email**

CVG *Since you only say you own a PC, then chances are it'll be better on that format, largely due to the fact playing on your imaginary PS2 gets dull after a while and your joypad gets all sore. Just don't play it with a keyboard and mouse – that'd be most... unnatural.*

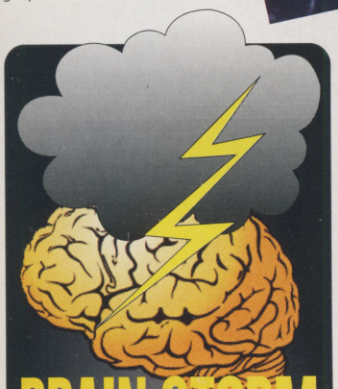
*Psst, wanna know what happens to Neo, my precious?*

## IN A TIFF

I was in the shops today and I noticed that another magazine had a REVIEW for The Return Of The King. Thinking back to your "EA won't let anyone review it," I would like you to explain that. Exactly.

**Tiff, via email**

CVG *Oooo, handbags at dawn, Tiff. At least you remembered to sign this one. But if you really want to slag us off, then try not getting your factoids in a fix. We actually said "WE'RE not allowed to review the game until after it goes on sale". Why? Because even CVG can't get the exclusive review on every game. We have to let the other mags have a few, or they blub like two-year-olds after a woo-did-it-weally-hurt Chinese burn.*



# BRAIN STORM

## GOT AN IDEA FOR A GAME? SEND IT HERE...

## CLOUD NINE

I saw you had a Brain Storm section in Mailbag (Issue 266). I have been waiting for such a section in your magazine for a very long time as I am an aspiring game designer just waiting for a chance, which is why I have come to you O Great Ones. Game: Final Fantasy Racing. Each character has a specific vehicle (Cloud – the FF7 motorbike) which has a mark out of 10 for Acceleration, Top Speed, Cornering and Strength. Depending on the character you exploit tracks in different ways. E.g. Wakka (Hovercraft) can take water short-cuts. Each character has a specific weapon as well as pick-ups in the form of four-colour Materia (e.g. red = Summon eg. Shiva freezes the road, making it slippy).

**Zola, email**

## BOLTON WONDERER

Can you tell me if they are ever going to make a Getaway 2 'cos the first one was awesome. And is there any news on Vice City on Xbox?

**Richard, Bolton**

CVG *Well, it's yet to be officially confirmed, but some stores are already listing Getaway 2 for release in March 2004. While that's definitely way way waaay too early for release, we'll eat all our TestStations without any ketchup washed down with warm urine if there isn't a sequel. As for GTA Vice City, it should've been out by now, but has apparently slipped back to January.*

*Vice City on Xbox in 2003? Sorry, another one that got away*

## FIRST TIME FOOLS

Come on then lads, own up! Who's the plonker that designed the Ice and Easy Compo in your last issue? The twat made the entry coupon black! Is this because they didn't want anyone to win, or do they expect everyone to own a Tipex pen? Or was it that the guy/girl was out on the piss the night before and the bright white coupon on his/her screen was hurting their eyes?

**Chinagon ov the D to the U to the mutha****ing B**

**Another bad man, straight outta Bristol City**

CVG *Do you have problem fitting your name on your passport? Any way you dress it up, though, it's stoopid, which is why this month's CVG Stinker goes to... us. We're big enough to take it on the chin (the criticism, that is...), but due to another alcohol-related technical hitch we're unable to print the usual poo award picture. Damn.*

## PIKA PIKA!

Remember the classic Rampage games where you destroyed a city with a huge ape, mouse or lizard? What if Nintendo brought out a Pokémon Rampage game where you control a giant Pokémon (maybe Squirtle and Charmander.) You would still have to collect all 350 – this could also get older gamers interested in the Pokémon faith.

**Andrew, Manchester**

## GUEST LETTER

### More strange letter from a parallel universe

### THEY ARE THE EGGMEN, WE ARE THE WALRUS

I like eating fish because I used to be one (in Scottish).

**Laura 'I'm not really Michael Stoke', Deakin**

# STAR LETTER

**JOYTECH**

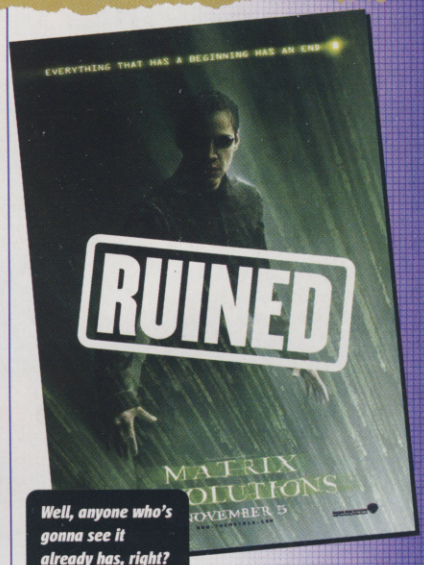
Each month's Star letter-writer gets a bundle of quality JOYTECH gear so please clearly mark your name and address.

WINNER

## THIS'LL CHEER YOU UP

Thought it best if I tell you about this website I found, which EASILY has the best info on PES 3, i.e. the team names and ALL of the players names! *Gasp* Did he say all?!? It's http://www.pesinsight.com.

**Pringles11**




*Well, anyone who's gonna see it already has, right?*

## BEWARE OF THE TOSSER

Just seen Revolutions. Both Neo and Trinity DIE. (I laugh manically). Sorry, I had to.

**Hosea, via email**

## THE REPLACEMENT KILLERS

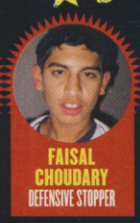
I'm 17 and even when under-aged played GTA. A lot of CVG's readers will be under 15 and may have not played the GTA games as their Mummies will not let them. So The Simpson's Hit & Run can in a way be a good thing because it allows younger gamers to play GTA without the murders and drive-bys, so their minds will not be destroyed. When reviewing a game just remember that these games weren't designed for more mature gamers like ourselves.

**Spider, via email**

CVG *Even Alex's Mum tried to stop him playing Vice City, and he's like 400 years old. As for GTA melting people's minds, that's so not true. Take you, for example, full of good advice on how we, CVG, should review games.*

# CHALLENGE CVG on tour

VS



## TEAM CVG VS HAYES ALL STARS FC

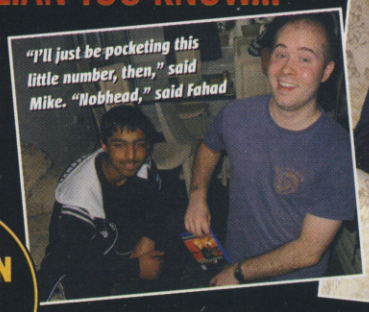
### OKAY, SO HE LOOKS LIKE PHIL MITCHELL, BUT CVG'S PRO EVO 3 STAR MIKE COOPER IS ACTUALLY HALF BRAZILIAN YOU KNOW...

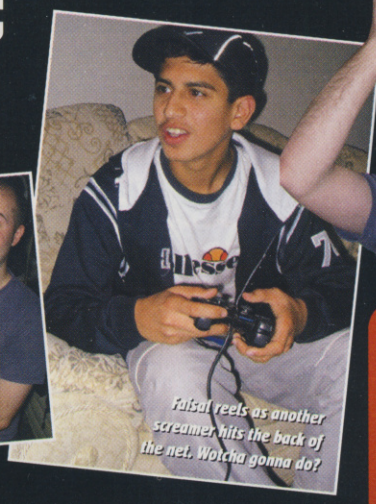
**With the footie season in full swing and Pro Evo 3 wasting every spare minute we've got, we thought it was high time we tested our skills against our plucky readers.**

Ahsan Iqbal from Hayes had been in touch, telling us he'd assembled a crack team of super-soccer commandoes "like a cross between the A-Team and Chelsea, but from Middlesex".

We talked tactics with our team-mates at Konami and they hooked us up with copies of Pro Evo 3 for anyone who could defeat our resident onion bag stretcher Mike Cooper. Not intimidated by the away fixture, he limbered up with a few squats in his 'favourite' shorts (the underpant lining's gone, and a grizzled nut kept popping out) and moseyed on down to Middlesex.

**CVG PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER MASTER LEAGUE**



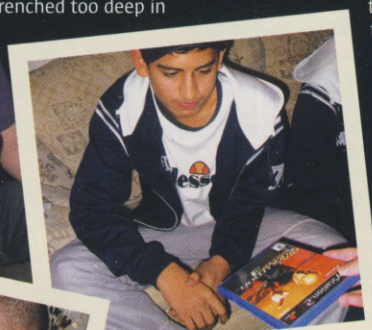



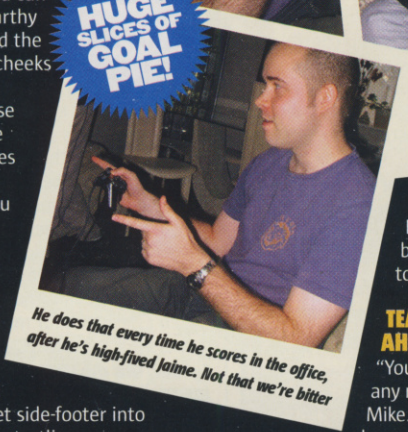

### TEAM CVG VS FAISAL

Faisal began the match foiling Mike with his granite-like defence. A clearance off the line and some limpet-like man-marking meant Mike couldn't get tricky. "Remember, this is my house!" screamed the defensive rock as he sent Ronaldo tumbling to the ground with a barbed tackle. Entrenched too deep in his own box, Faisal couldn't break. Team CVG took it 2-0!

### TEAM CVG VS FAHAD

Mike, who keeps telling us he's half Brazilian ("Honestly, you can tell by my swarthy good looks and the way my bum cheeks sit pertly in a thong...") chose Brazil, and the lads from Hayes settled on Arsenal. "If you think you can outskill me, think again," challenged Fahad, just as Mike skipped past three defenders and slipped a sweet side-footer into the net. Some startling runs from Henry couldn't halt the Cooper steamroller, and the half-Brazilian maestro coasted to a 3-0 win!



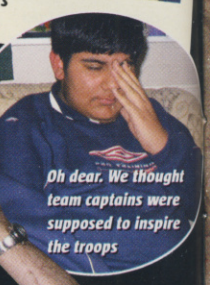

### TEAM CVG VS AHSAN

"You're not singing any more!" yelled Mike. Indeed, the home crowd had been stunned into silence. Team lynchpin Ahsad pulled on his captain's armband. His tactical intelligence became clear as he tried to score while Mike was posing (literally, 'posing') for photos. "All's fair in football and war, and this is both," he spat. "Can't say fairer than that," replied Mike, sending a thunderbolt fizzing into the top corner from the edge of the box. 2-0 to Team CVG.

### TEAM CVG VS KHALIL

Since no-one had managed to topple Mike, he conceded that if Khalil beat him he'd hand out the copies. "Come on, man, you've got to win it for us!" shouted the others. Inspired by this, Khalil embarked on a blitz of Mike's shins. Two penalties, a free kick into the top corner, and several stretcher-bearers later, the score was 3-0 to Team CVG.




**CHALLENGE CVG WINNER: WINNER: TEAM CVG!**

### CHAMPION-AYS, CHAMPION-AYS, OH WAY OH WAY OH WAY OH!

**Without the advantage of home crowd support and outnumbered, our Mike came through the Pro Evo 3 Master League like some sort of cross between the tactics of Sven-Goran Eriksson and the on-pitch skills of Ronaldo.**

Time after time he served up huge helpings of goal pie and smeared it all over the faces of the boys from Hayes.

Then, drunk with victory, he danced around holding the copies of Pro Evo aloft. Incensed by this shameless goading of the crowd, the referee produced the red card and declared that Hayes All Star FC should receive the games. Result!

Team CVG's reputation left intact and four happy footballers from Hayes. Maybe it is the beautiful game after all...

## DON'T SING IT, BRING IT

CHALLENGE CVG on tour

**You might have noticed some changes to Challenge CVG.**

Sure, we know how rewarding it would be just to feel the thrill of beating us, but since that happens so rarely we figured we better add incentives. If you think you're up to the challenge fill in the coupon, get your parent or guardian to put their autograph on it and send it in. You never know, we might have something special for ya!

★HELLO, MY NAME IS: .....

★BUT YOU MUST CALL ME ..... [nickname] ★AND I'M ..... [age]

★I AM THE BEST AT: ..... [game name]

★MY ADDRESS IS: .....

★DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO: ..... ★EVENING TELEPHONE NO: .....

★EMAIL: .....

Send to: CVG Reader Challenge, CVG magazine, Dennis Publishing, 9 Dallington Street. London, EC1V 0BQ

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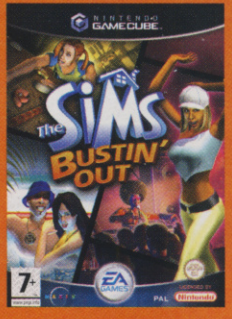
# Take your first step into a whole new world.

## And take your Sims with you wherever you go.

Create your own cast of characters and take them out of the house and out on the town.

Who wants to leave their favourite Sim at home? With Nintendo Connectivity, you can download Sims from your Nintendo GameCube™ to your Game Boy Advance™ and have them in your pocket for the rest of the day. So you can enjoy the action wherever you are, whenever you want.



They'll get to meet a wild cast of characters in any number of crazy locations, from the rocking Club Rubb to Pixel Acres Nudist Camp.

See if you can control your Sims in this brave new world. Then see if you can control yourself.

EA GAMES

Challenge Everything

thesims.uk.ea.com

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TOP SECRET: UNDERCOVER PLAYTEST

# Syphon Filter™

## THE OMEGA STRAIN

■ PUBLISHER
SONY
■ DEVELOPER
SCEA
■ OUT: MARCH 2004

ONLINE GAMING | x4

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AVAILABLE ON

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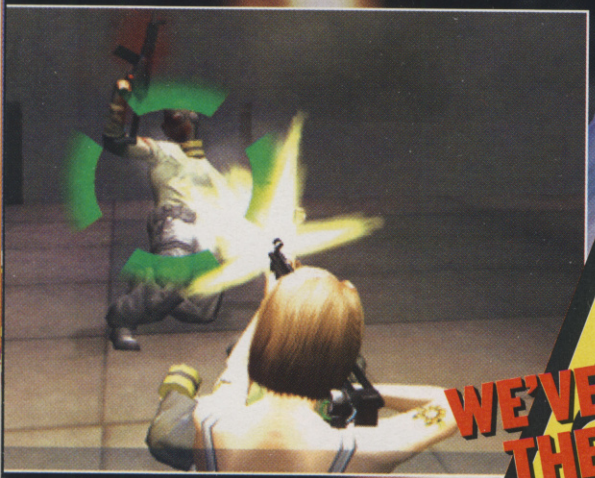
### GRAB YOUR HAZ-MAT SUIT AND PREPARE TO ENTER THE HOT ZONE – SONY'S NEW SPY 'EM UP IS SERIOUSLY CONTAGIOUS!

**We reckon a great game is a bit like a virus, except hopefully it won't make your eyeballs turn to mush and your guts drop out your arsehole. It should, however, work its way into your system without notice, invade your bloodstream quickly, then grip you with jagged claws through long, sleepless nights.**

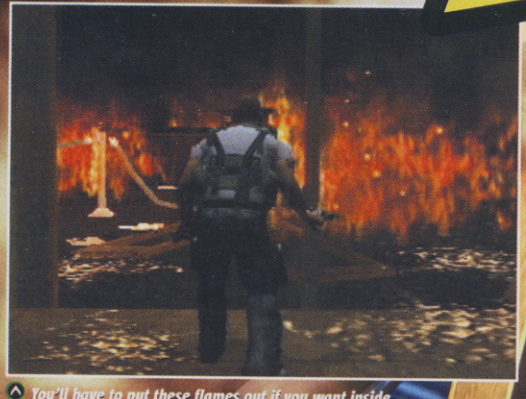
After early exposure in the CVG quarantine zone, it looks like Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain is going to be particularly virulent. Our guts haven't fallen out yet either, so that's good too.

While Metal Gear pretty much invented the stealth 'em up, Syphon Filter took the formula and infected it with a load of class gadgets and a killer dose of explosive gunplay. This is the fourth game in the series and the first on PS2, so it's taking things to a whole new level. »



Enemies will drop according to how you killed them

WE'VE CAUGHT THE VIRUS!

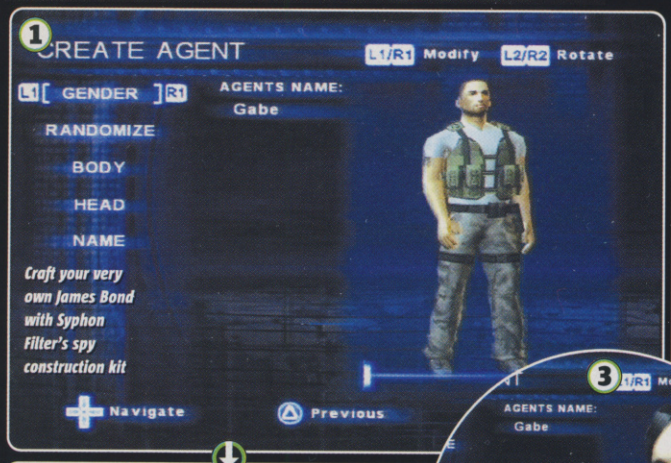


You'll have to put these flames out if you want inside

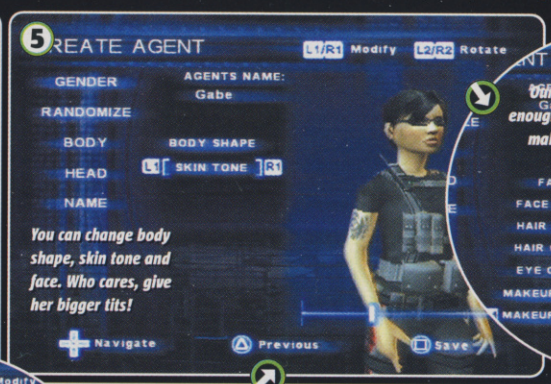
# EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

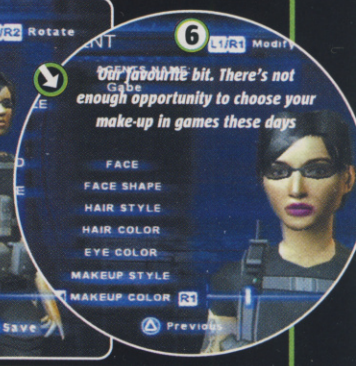
**Past Syphon Filter games have seen you take the role of Gabe Logan, now the head of the newly formed IPCA Agency.**

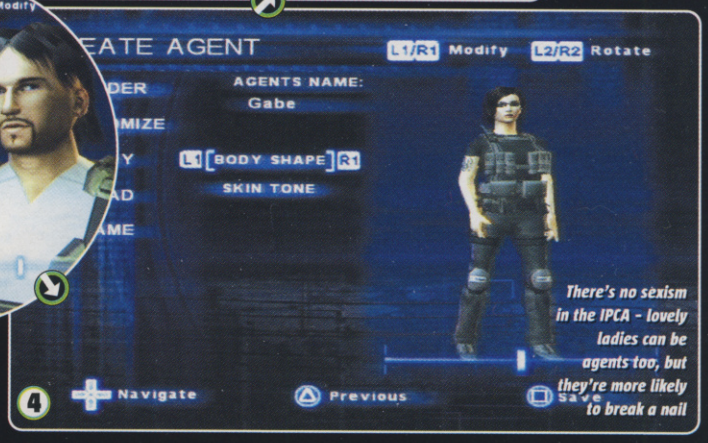
Like our boss Alex, the big cheese always manages to exclude himself from the dirty work, so you get to design a new recruit in your own glorious image.



Or you could team up a goatee with a greasy mullet for that Dirty Sanchez look



Crossfire can easily blow vehicles up. Don't stand too close

Twist your body to keep track of targets - cos they bloody do!

Tons of claret on clothes = close to death

A targeting reticle = bad guy about to get nailed

## GUNS AND GAMES

**We like fiddling with gadgets, but you can't beat a big gun for fun. Omega Strain has 51 different shooters, enough to give any self-respecting militia mentalist a raging boner.**

On top of that there's eight different types of grenade, three types of explosive and four different types of knife, including the Ann Summers-meets-SAS Vibro Blade Combat Knife.

M-16s, Colt .45s, SIG Sauer P-229s, Beretta 92Fs... Take your pick

In fact, our intel suggests that by the end of this instalment you'll know the whole murky truth about the Syphon Filter virus.

### VIRUS PROTECTION

It's the final chapter in the story, but that doesn't mean Omega Strain is just a rehash of the PSX games. We're talking seriously next-gen here. First of all you'll no longer be playing as the mono-voiced superspy from the first three games, Gabe Logan. He's gone up in the world and is running the show, so you get to create a new agent to blow the crap out of stuff.

There's no training - you're dumped straight into the shite, but we wouldn't want it any other way.

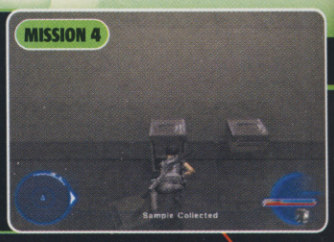
# FILLING YOUR MISSION BRIEFS

**The missions in Omega Strain are bigger and more complex than ever.**

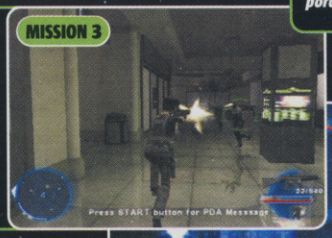
You might start off in a stinking sewer and end up busting caps in a cinema, dripping crap and dead terrorists all over the plush seats. Each level sprawls over multiple levels and getting from one area to the next is often as difficult as staying out of terrorists' cross hairs.

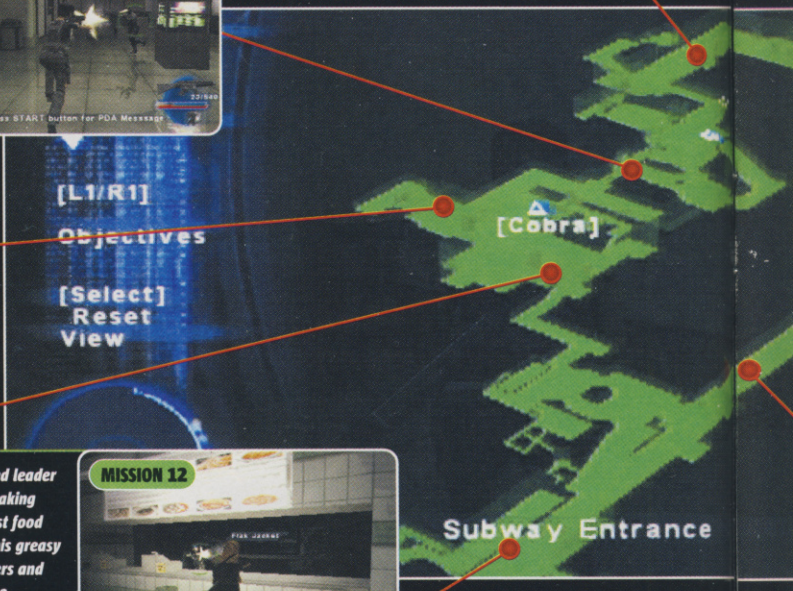
Here's a briefing on what to expect from an early level, and you better listen up - the IPCA expects its agents to be able to do more than shoot a few terrorists in the face...

*Collect some infected water sample for analysis. Stay away from the stinking bogs, though - Syphon Filter gives you the serious squits and the porcelain's well messy*

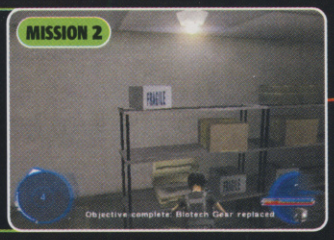



*Head down into the mall. The shops are busy and there's a special offer on - cap one terrorist, get another 20 viciously hunting you down and shooting at you. For free*



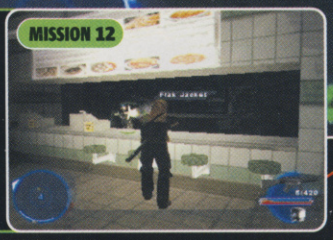




*The terrorists have nicked off with our Biotech gear, the gypsies. Track down a replacement pack in the storeroom and don't be tempted to pilfer anything else*




*You'll be entering the Hot Zone outside this burning bank. Have a good look around - if you can get the sprinklers on there might be something useful inside...*

*The flak-jacketed leader of the gang is taking cover in this fast food joint, stuffing his greasy face with burgers and chips. Go for the headshot - he won't be lovin' that*




Omega Strain is viewed from the traditional third-person viewpoint, but for once the camera behaves. It always stays firmly locked on your agent's back, ensuring you never end up staring dumbly out of the screen as some hidden terror-dude whaps you with a pump action. Get close to a wall and your body melts away, leaving you with a first-person view of the bloodbath in front of you.

## TARGET PRACTICE

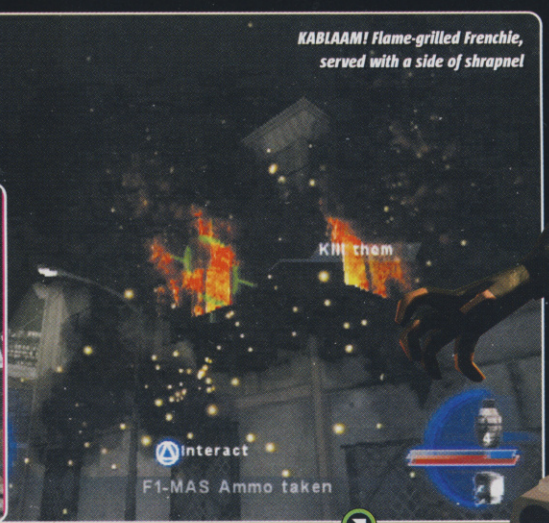
It makes taking down terrorists even more enjoyable. Holding the R1 button locks onto the nearest enemy, allowing you to strafe, roll, duck and run while busting off a barrage of bullets. If an enemy's up high you'll twist at the waist to track them, and if you stumble into a corridor and come under fire, one button press will line up the attacker in your sights. Don't think it makes downing bad dudes easy, though. Shoot while running and your bullets will fizz past their target, but take a knee and

# BIG BOSS MEN

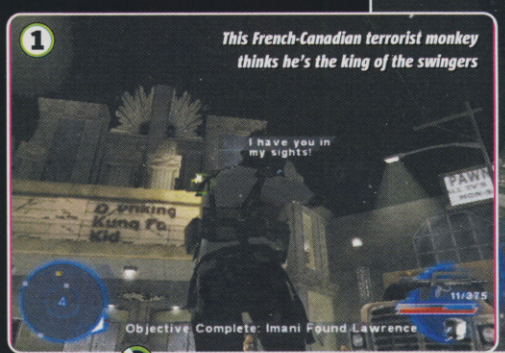
**Missions usually end with you having to take down a badass terrorist ringleader.**

These guys aren't your usual moustachioed cannon fodder - they're smart, well equipped and evidently pretty good at jumping gaping chasms...

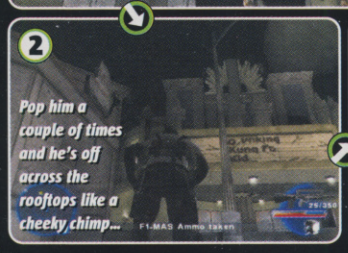
5 *KABLAAM! Flame-grilled Frenchie, served with a side of shrapnel*



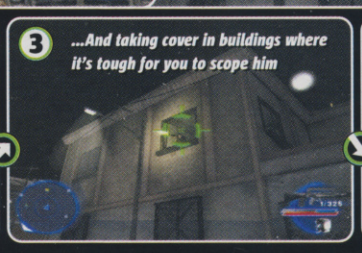

1 *This French-Canadian terrorist monkey thinks he's the king of the swingers*



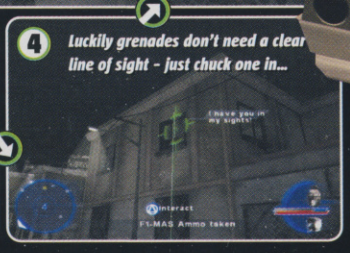

2 *Pop him a couple of times and he's off across the rooftops like a cheeky chimp...*



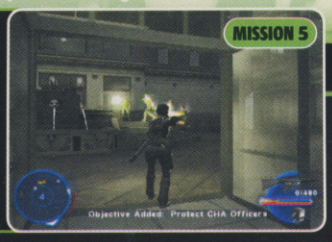

3 *...And taking cover in buildings where it's tough for you to scope him*



4 *Luckily grenades don't need a clear line of sight - just chuck one in...*



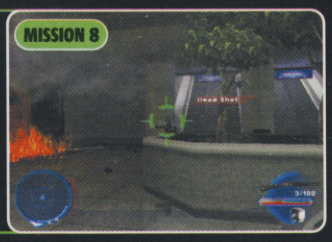
Canadian Health Authority agents are operating in the area. They're a bunch of namby-pamby brainiacs so you'll have to look after them by watching their backs



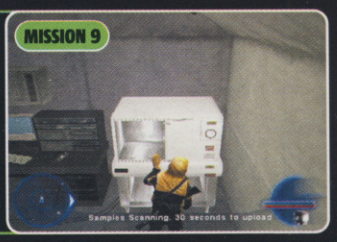

Change into something a little less comfortable. CHA hazmat suits look like Easyjet uniforms. Not very stylish, but at least you won't die a horrible death

We hope you've boned up on your biology – you need to perform an autopsy on this stiff to make sure he was exposed to the virus. Reminds us of chopping up frogs at school

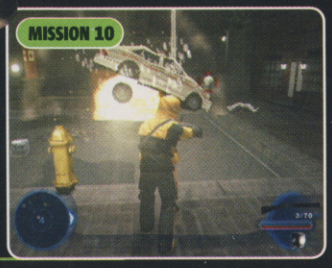
Get back into the mall and head for the mobile lab. The bad dudes are taking cover this time. Note: headshots not only look cool, they take bad guys down quicker and save your ammo



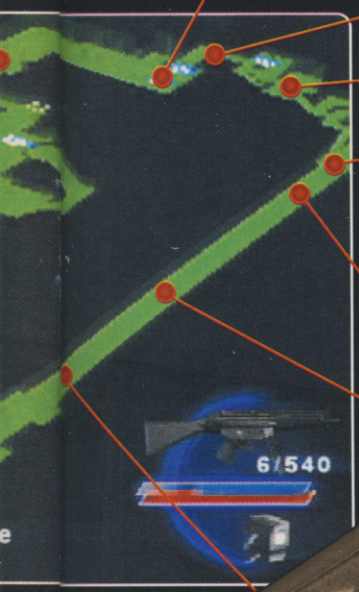

Once into the laboratory get your samples scanned and upload the data. Who said secret agents were dumbasses? IPCA agents are the cleverest cookies around




Head for the subway. There's plenty of bad guys about, but an exploding car will thin them out




Once into the darkness of the subway you'll have to tread carefully – terrorists are hiding in the gloom. Night vision goggles would help, but you'll have to get them off a terrorist

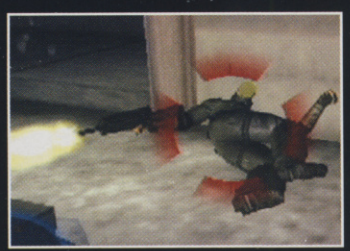


Highly trained death squads take loads of punishment. Aim for their heads!



We've seen better explosions but the particle effects are brilliant

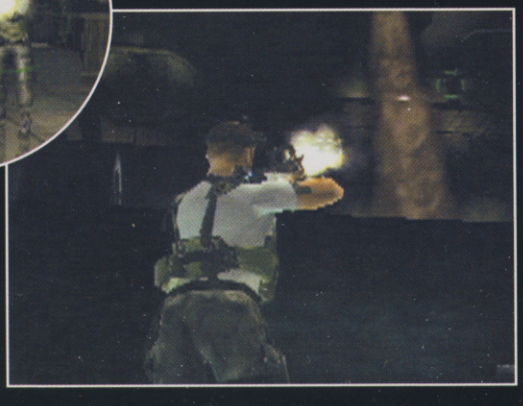
The enemies are impressively intelligent. They'll retreat behind cover and pop out firing



Dead enemies flail to the ground with their weapons still firing. Won't help you now, dude!

Stand close to a wall and your view moves into first-person mode

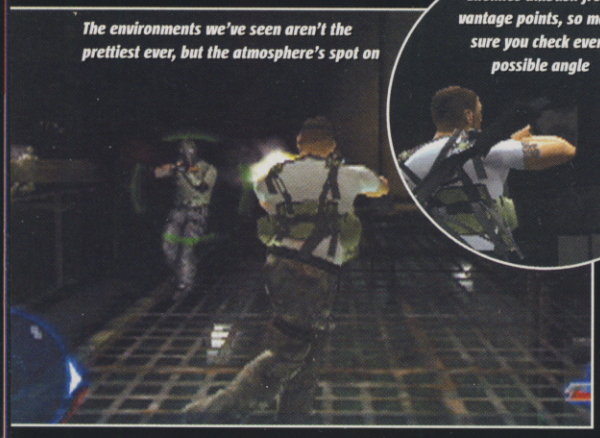
Terrorists give away clues with their chatter – don't shoot till they're finished!

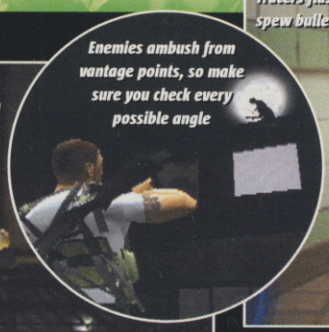


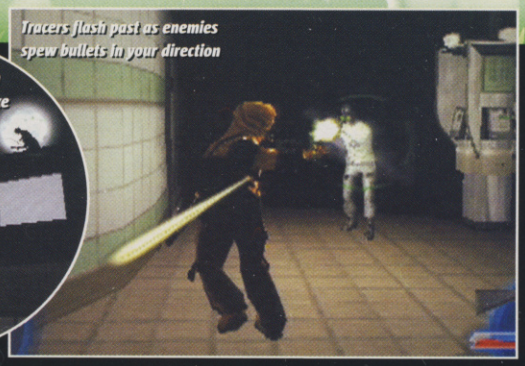
you'll be able to shoot the hairs off a fly's arse.

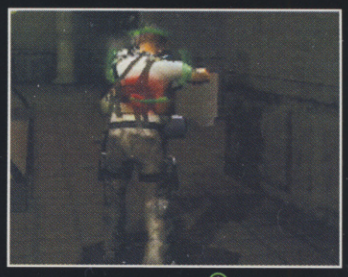
If sharpshooting pulls your trigger, hold the L1 button to zoom in for the killer headshot, and if you hold both shoulder buttons you can target individual body parts. Useful for bypassing pussy protection like flak jackets.

And there's plenty of bad guys to practise your aim on – the levels we played were stuffed full of greasy French-spraffing terrorists. The gunplay is quick and satisfying, with enemies popping out of windows and doorways


The environments we've seen aren't the prettiest ever, but the atmosphere's spot on

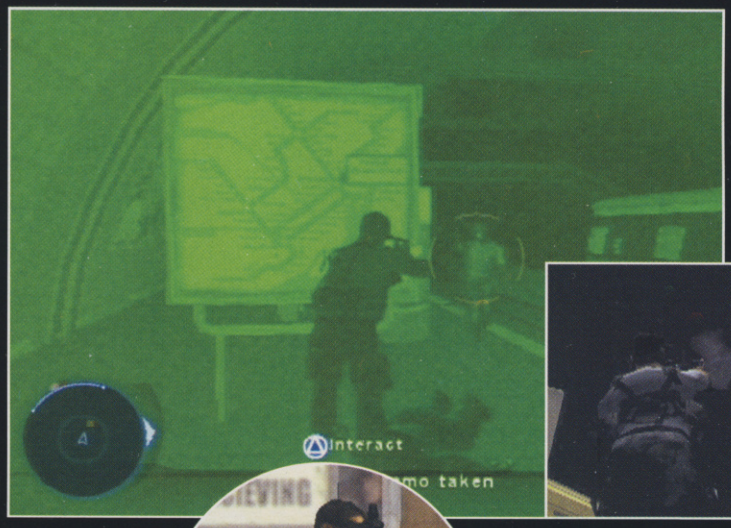

Enemies ambush from vantage points, so make sure you check every possible angle

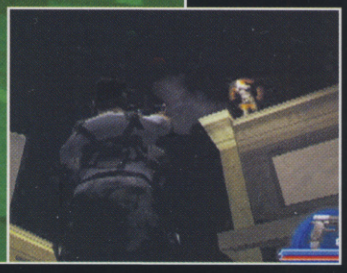

Tracers flash past as enemies spew bullets in your direction

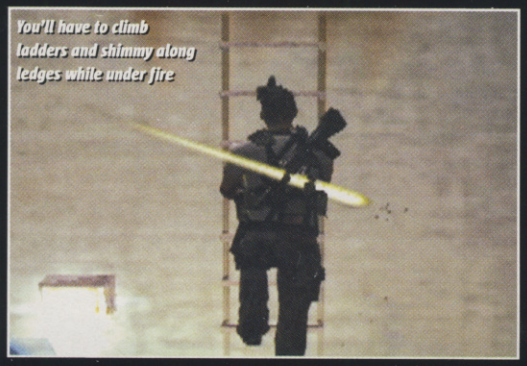

Get capped and blood sprays from the exit wound

Terrorists aren't afraid to hunt you down

Press R1 to automatically target the enemy




You'll have to climb ladders and shimmy along ledges while under fire

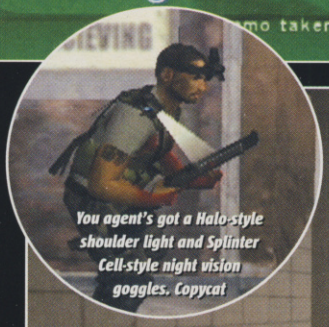
# BLOWING UP SHIT - TOGETHER!

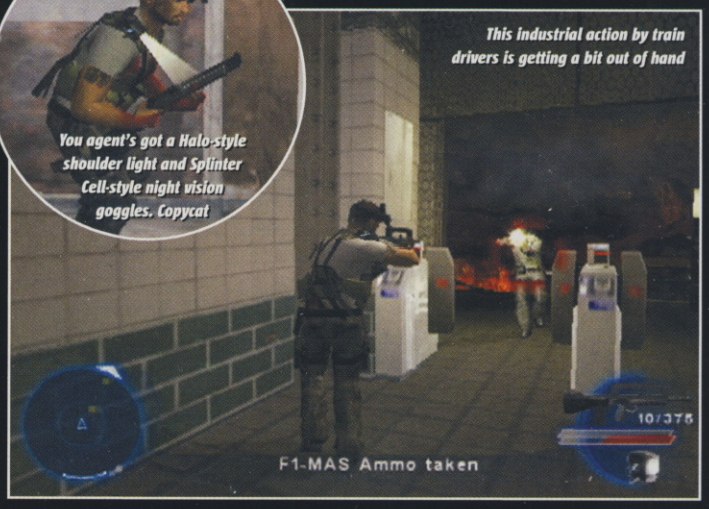
**When we asked the Syphon Filter team about the online co-op mode, they told us their motto is 'Omega Strain: blowing shit up – together!' Even though we had to wash their mouths out with soap, we can't say fairer than that.**

What's cool about Omega Strain online is that it's not a bonus or an add-on – the whole game's built around it. Of the 17 missions, nine have been designed for co-op play, so you can start a game with three mates and play through to the end. Of course, by that time you'll be battle-hardened, emotionless drones unable to show affection for each other, but it'll still be fun anyway.

Of course, that's not to say that the singleplayer experience won't be as much fun. The multiplayer mode doesn't offer the best way to complete the missions, but rather gives you more scope for tactical thought and lets you do some cool stuff you can't do on your own – like a super-high jump that you can only do with a leg-up from a mate.

Playing multiplayer will open up unlockables and awards unavailable to the single player. If you've got a particularly crack team of secret agents you can even form an Agency Cell, like a Counter-Strike clan, and show off your super-fast mission completion times!


You agent's got a Halo-style shoulder light and Splinter Cell-style night vision goggles. Copycat



This industrial action by train drivers is getting a bit out of hand

# CVG INTERROGATION

**After stealthily breaking in to Sony's HQ we managed to capture John Garvin, Syphon Filter's creative director. We had to pluck out his pubes one by one to get him to talk, but he cracked pretty damn quickly, you can be sure of that...**

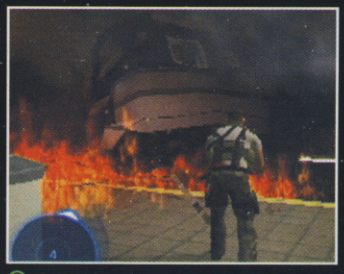
**CVG So how important is co-op to Omega Strain?**
It was pretty much the most important consideration. I liked the challenge of recreating the Syphon Filter universe, but we also really want to give players the chance to enjoy it with friends.

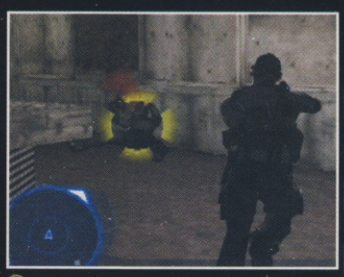
**CVG Isn't it just the same mission with four players?**
You'll still be kicking terrorist ass, but four agents have loads more options. A team can split up to do the objectives, with, for example, two running off to collect water samples, while the others use C4 to open a passage and get to the terrorist leader.

**CVG Our Pete loves barking orders at us. Will we be able to call him a nobhead through our USB headsets?**
We support the headset so players can talk tactics or just call each other names, and we have a robust quickchat text system so that a player can ask for back-up.

**CVG Will we be able to specialise in certain areas? Reason we ask, is Mike's a bit of a girl so he prefers sniping.**
There are six Agency ratings you can work on: firearms skills, knife usage, sharpshooting, non-lethal combat, explosives and team efficiency. As you improve, you unlock new weapons and patches you can wear in the game to show off your skills.

**CVG Come on, everything's online these days. Give us one good reason why should we be excited about Omega Strain?**
If you're good enough you'll actually be able cure the Omega Strain, and the very best will be able to rise to the rank of Gabe Logan himself. Doing that on your own is cool – doing it in a team is awesome.


The set-piece events are cool – this is definitely going to delay your journey


Different weapons affect your style of play. Shotguns deliver a meaty blast at short range

to take pot shots, ducking behind cover, and hunting you down in packs.

## STEALTHY OPTIONS

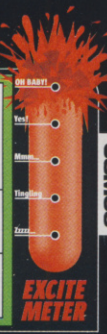
But stealth in Syphon Filter is like sweetcorn in jobbies – there's always a little bit. Some levels will see you sneaking about, but it looks like you'll have more choice about how you want to complete your objectives.

It's shaping up to be so good we had to declare the CVG games room a Hot Zone. We'll be spreading the Omega Strain come springtime. CVG

**CVG OPINION**
Shoot-outs fizzing with hot lead, espionage sizzling with stealth, a wicked plotline and an online co-op mode. Is there a cure for our excitement? Graeme

**WE LOVE**
- Espionage with all guns blazing
- Huge, multi-level missions in cool locations

**WE HATE**
- Missions a wee bit linear
- Visuals could do with cleaning up before release



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Still hungry for more even after thumbing through this game-packed issue of CVG? Logging onto **ComputerAndVideogames.com** will satisfy the biggest gaming appetites

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# ON INFO!

## IT'S GOOD TO TALK

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# INCOMING

## ACCESS ALL AREAS TO THE FATTEST FORTHCOMING GAMES!

### HOW CVG'S PREVIEWS WORK

- PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER: ACTIVISION
- OUT: DECEMBER 25
- ONLINE GAMING
- x4

**IN A NUTSHELL**

Hotly anticipated, super-realistic, sneaky covert-ops sequel to last year's first-person shooter. The team-orientated multiplayer mode encompasses a wide variety of objective-based missions.

AVAILABLE ON: PS2

WWW.ACTIVISION.COM

**ONLINE GAMING**
Can you play the game online, against other gamers around the globe? Find out here

**PUBLISHER, DEVELOPER AND RELEASE DATE**
Who makes the game and when it's due out, to the best of CVG's knowledge

**PLAYERS**
How many people can play. If it's anything from one to 32, we'll put 32!

**IN A NUTSHELL**
A brief summary of what the game is like. If it's an update and CVG has already previewed it we'll also sum up stuff we've said before

**FORMAT**
The console we played the game on is highlighted red, but other formats it's coming out on are listed too!

**WEBSITE**
Want more info, more screens and to see it in action? Visit this URL!

**INFO OVERLOAD!**
What it's like to play, how it compares to other games and whether it's any good

**THE BEST PICS**
See exactly how good (or bad!) the game looks with CVG's sweet as screenshots

**CVG OPINION**
What we thought of the game, no matter what stage of development the game is at

**WE LOVE**
The good things we like about the game so far

**WE HATE**
The things we'd really like the developers to avoid including in the final game

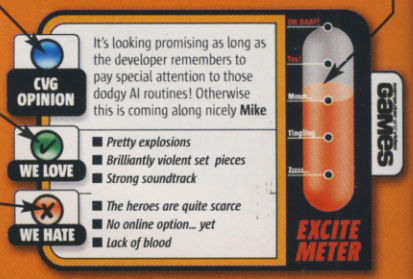
**WHAT THE EXCITE METER™ MEANS**

You can tell how excited CVG's experts are about the game being previewed simply by looking at the Excite Meter! Easy, huh?

CVG OPINION: It's looking promising as long as the developer remembers to pay special attention to those dodgy AI routines! Otherwise this is coming along nicely **Mike**

WE LOVE:
- *Pretty explosions*
- *Brilliantly violent set pieces*
- *Strong soundtrack*

WE HATE:
- *The heroes are quite scarce*
- *No online option... yet*
- *Lack of blood*




# SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS

- PUBLISHER: SONY
- DEVELOPER: ZIPPER INTERACTIVE
- OUT: TBC
- ONLINE GAMING
- x8

**IN A NUTSHELL**

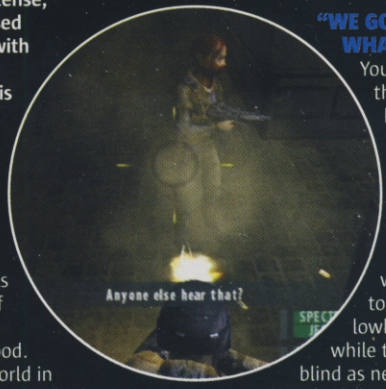
The sequel to last year's best-selling online tactical team-based shooter which follows the antics of the US equivalent of the SAS. You and your four-man squad have to use combat and stealth to win the war on terror.

AVAILABLE ON: PS2

WWW.US.PLAYSTATION.COM/CONTENT/GAMES/SCUS-97275/OGS/

**After seeing the US Navy use trained dolphins to clear sea mines in Iraq, we were hoping this sequel would have something to do with elite mercenary circus seals. Instead it's an intense, hi-tech, team-based tactical shooter with a massive online presence. Which is undoubtedly for the better.**

For those new to the world of the international war on terror, the US Navy SEALs are the hardest of the hard, and the goodest of the good. They travel the world in teams of four, ravaging bad-guy butt to make the world a better place for democracy and the American way. Signing up with these geezers means mastering a number of firearms, together with a bunch of tactical manoeuvres, so that your team of four can co-ordinate to overcome whatever no-good, raggedy-ass SOBs should stand in your way.




### "WE GO IN, WE GET WHAT WE WANT"

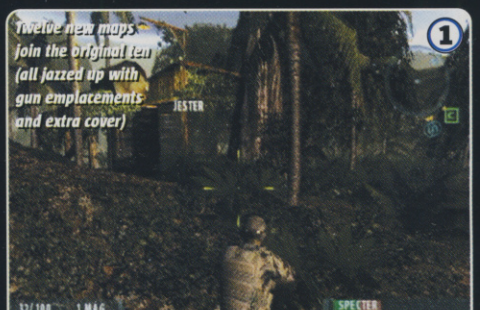
You can't just march through doors one by one. The point man kicks the door in, Bravo team rolls a flashbang in there, and then you all pile in with guns blazing to pepper the lowlifes with hot lead while they're still as blind as new-born pups.

You don't just all up and charge an enemy bunker; one of you pops some smoke, Alpha team lays down covering fire, and then you order that bloke you don't like to

### IT'S THE AXIS OF EVIL

**We can't tell you too much about how the online terrorist vs special forces side of SOCOM II actually plays as it's not up and running over here yet. Which is a shame because playing on the Net was the best bit about the first game.**

What we can say, though, is that there's tons of new stuff crammed in for those lucky enough to have a broadband connection.

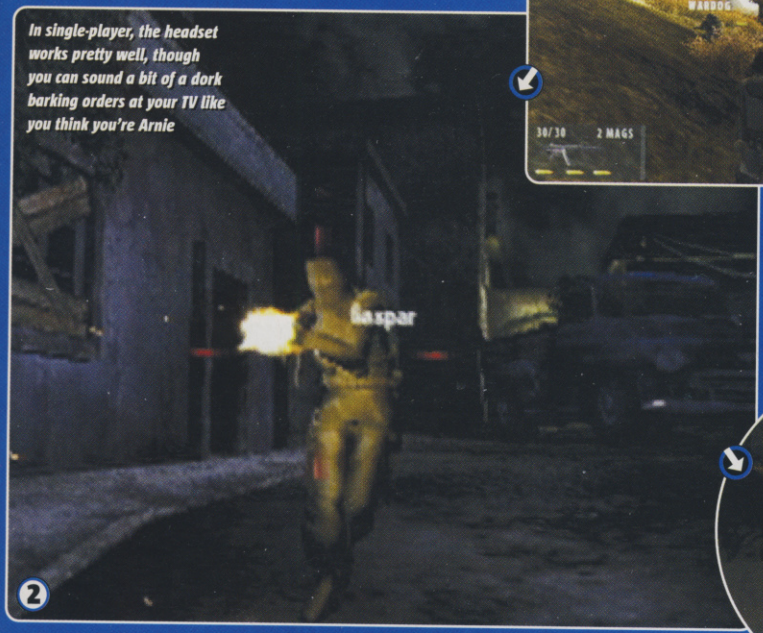


## COMMAND & CONQUER!

**Co-ordinating with your team-mates, in both single-player and multiplayer is the most important aspect of SOCOM II.**

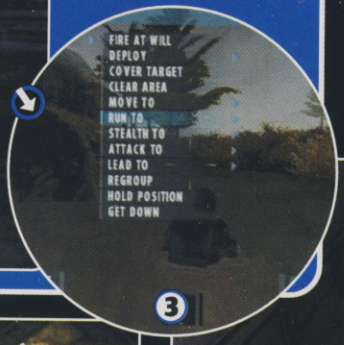
Online, this is done over a funky USB headset, while in single-player you can use this or a more traditional joypad-operated interface.

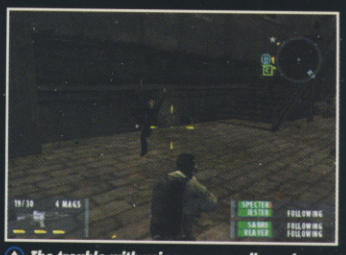
*In single-player, the headset works pretty well, though you can sound a bit of a dork barking orders at your TV like you think you're Arnie*



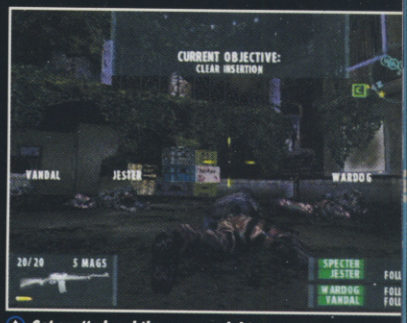

*The game's not live here yet, so we can't talk about changes to the multiplayer communications*

*The traditional orders system works okay, though is a little clunky to use*



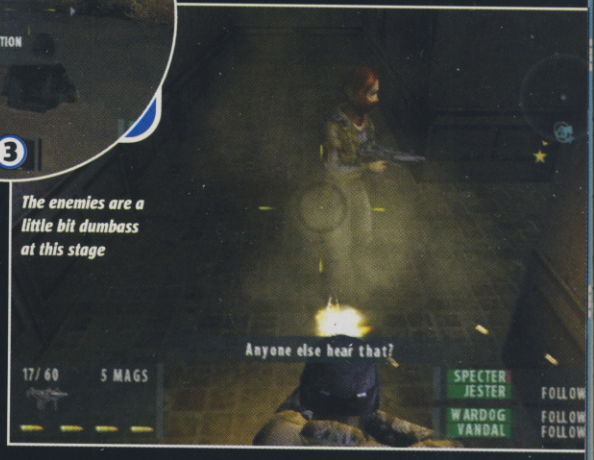



*The trouble with using so many silenced weapons is that you miss the roar of battle!*

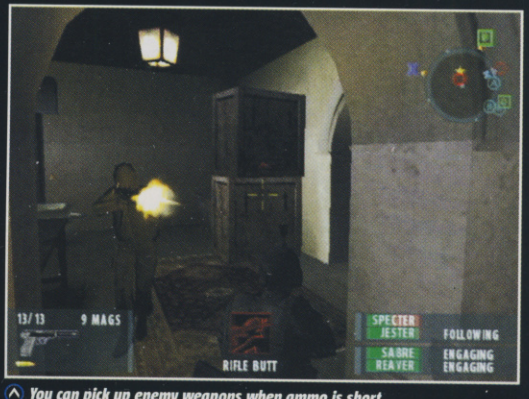



*Get spotted and the enemy might summon extra reinforcements for you to deal with*

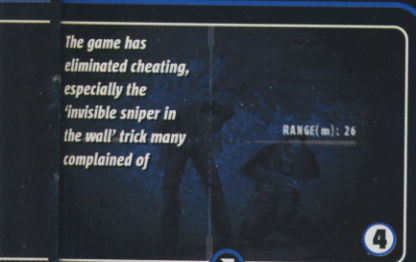
*Not killing too many innocents is always a priority in SOCOM. You'll suffer for it if you do. You'll suffer IN HELL*



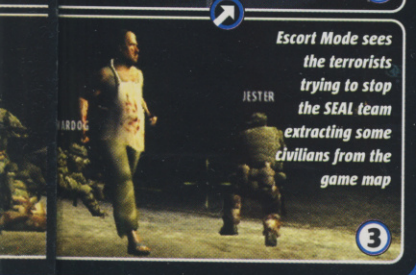

*The enemies are a little bit dumbass at this stage*




*You can pick up enemy weapons when ammo is short*




*The game has eliminated cheating, especially the 'invisible sniper in the wall' trick many complained of*




*Escort Mode sees the terrorists trying to stop the SEAL team extracting some civilians from the game map*

*The tac map can be very useful*

*Amazing 'green screen' effects in action!*

charge round the back and deal with whatever's left.

But we're not suggesting it's all about combat tactics. Only a fool would do that, as good players of SOCOM II will spend most of their game time undetected by the enemy. After all, if the first thing that the enemy sees of you is one of your bullets with half his frontal lobe stuck to it exiting his forehead, then there's a better than average chance he's not going to be able to interfere with your mission.

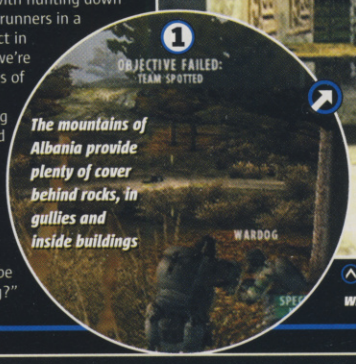
Which means stealth tactics are a priority in any game of SOCOM II. Keep low to reduce your silhouette. Stick to the shrubs and undergrowth to obscure the enemy's line of sight. Creep around enemy sentry points so no one hears your footsteps. Take out guards at range with silenced sniper rifles to avoid the alarm being raised. In some missions, this kind of silent skullduggery is absolutely crucial since getting spotted might mean an early bath after the kingpin you're supposed to kidnap flees in a plane following your discovery.

Though the visuals have been tweaked, SOCOM II looks and sounds similar to its predecessor, with the emphasis on gritty realism. There are some nice touches such as the contrast changing when you look

## HOT SPOTS

**This time round, the SOCOM team are on the kind of world tour you can just imagine the rep down at Thomas Cook doing her damndest to hard-sell.**

"Our trip kicks off with hunting down some war-criminal gun-runners in a disused industrial district in lawless Albania. Next, we're off to the teeming slums of Rio De Janeiro in Brazil. Here, when not avoiding diseased prostitutes and treacherous drug dealers, we'll be trading shots with a faction of extremist guerrillas intent on bringing down the government. Will that be catering or self-catering?"



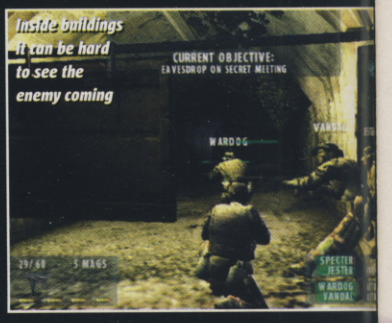

*The mountains of Albania provide plenty of cover behind rocks, in gullies and inside buildings*

*The slums of Brazil are a deathtrap, with a terrorist around every corner*

*Tunisia provides a sandy backdrop for your stealthy and relentless pursuit of religious nuts. Go get your quota for Uncle Sam*

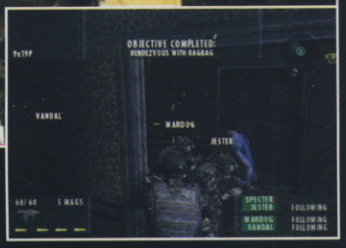
*Much of the game takes place at night - the perfect excuse for night-vision goggles*

*Team members have to provide covering fire for each other, or they're dead meat*




*Inside buildings it can be hard to see the enemy coming*

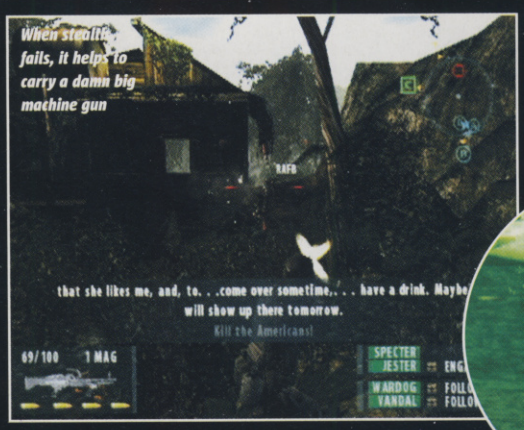
*Heavy weapons, like this grenade launcher, are highly prized in later missions*




*Sometimes the SAS come along for the ride*

*Selecting the right order can be a pain without the headset interface*

*Watching your boys carry out orders will make you proud*



towards the sun, and the night-vision is as cool as it ever was. The sounds are pretty nifty, too: your footsteps change from stone to snow to grass, and you can tell the direction and distance of gunfire from its noise.

Despite all this, having played the US version to death offline, we're as seriously concerned about the one-player mode as we are excited about the multiplayer side of things. The sometimes tricky missions take a good 20 minutes to complete, but offer no save points halfway through – a sure-fire recipe for frustration. And that ain't all: the enemy behaves in some diabolically unrealistic ways, like not reacting to nearby gunfire or suicidally charging headlong into a hail of bullets. We'll see how it all turns out in the Euro version, but right now, we suspect SOCOM II, like its predecessor, is going to be far better online than on your own. CVG

**CVG OPINION**

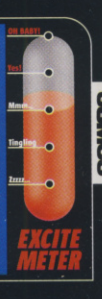
This is shaping up to be a dose of intense, team-based action in multiplayer; while in single-player, it's looking drab and annoying right now. **Steve**

**WE LOVE**

- Headset multiplayer teamwork
- Atmospheric sound and visuals
- Superb online possibilities

**WE HATE**

- Dodgy enemy AI behaviour
- No save points in the missions
- Singleplayer looking weak



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# FINAL CHANCE!

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Due to popular demand, a handful of strictly limited places have been reopened to enable registration to the biggest PES3 Tournament the UK has ever seen.

Throughout January, a small number of much sought after places will be available to for fans to join some of the nine National Leagues currently up and running. All you have to do is regularly check the Official PES3 National League website at www.pesleague.co.uk to see where and when you can register.

Please note, some leagues are already full and the remaining places in the other leagues will be allocated on a first come first served basis. For more information go to www.pesleague.co.uk

**Thousands of pounds of prizes up for grabs! Check www.pesleague.co.uk in January to register.**

# DEUS EX INVISIBLE WAR

PUBLISHER EIDOS
DEVELOPER ION STORM
OUT: FEBRUARY 2004

**IN A NUTSHELL**

Twenty-years-on sequel to gaming legend Warren Spector's classic sci-fi role-playing shooter adventure, only this time more focused and console-friendly. Playing as YOU want is where it's at. It's pre-Xmas US release looks worryingly rushed if our preview code is anything to go by. We're hoping the Euro version'll be more polished..

AVAILABLE ON XBOX

ALSO ON PC

WWW.DEUS-EX.COM

**Now Christmas is upon us, we at CVG like to keep warm by burning stinky Mailbag letters and then jogging round to the sender's house and posting dog eggs through their door. Y'see, life's about making choices and living with the consequences. Send us a crap letter and we'll return the compliment. A bit like playing Invisible War, really.**

Ion Storm's sequel guts a whole bunch of features from the original, but what's left is what's most important in Deus Ex games: the freedom of choice to go at objectives how YOU want to, to develop your character to suit YOUR style of play, to shape the story and your destiny by YOUR actions.

Just don't expect any of Invisible War's multiple endings to be anything but dark. After all, you're in the Deus Ex universe now, with more plots - and bodies - than a plague graveyard. CVG

## YOU CHOOSE

Chicago just got Bin Laden-ed by nanotech terrorists, but your character, Alex, escapes to a Tarsus training facility in Seattle, only to immediately come under attack again. Maybe it's a personal hygiene thing. Anyway, here's where you make some major choices: if you're male or female (tough one that) and the sort of skills you're going to use in the form of biomods, which neatly combine the original game's skills and nano augmentation features.

You have five main slots and a choice of three types for each, ranging from a Neural Interface to hack security systems to Strength for added damage and carrying more. All can be upgraded to new and cooler powers, some are permanently on, some require energy cells and some are only available on the black market. As you progress, you find more.

Biomodding's simpler than it sounds – think Return Of The King's skill tree and you're not far off. But it's easiest to show how a typical section can be different depending on how you choose to play...

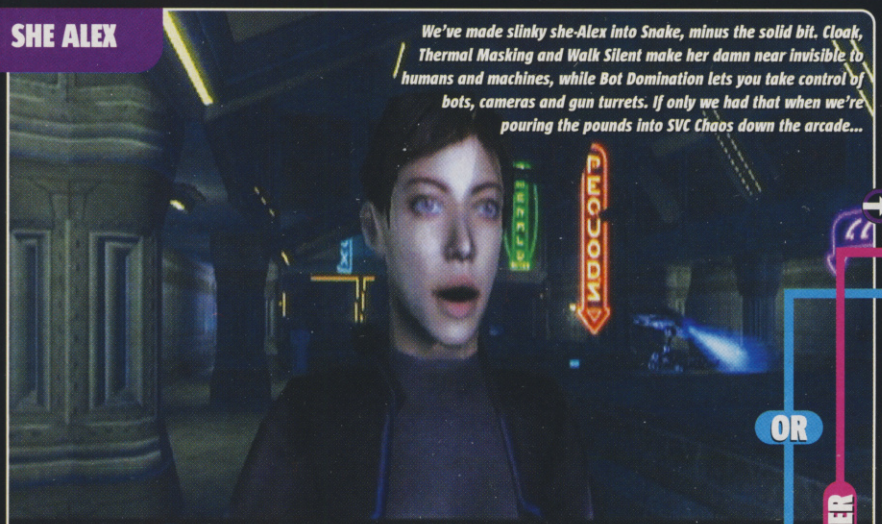
JUST FOLLOW THE 'EITHER' AND 'OR' LINES TO SEE HOW YOU DECIDE YOUR FUTURE!

EITHER

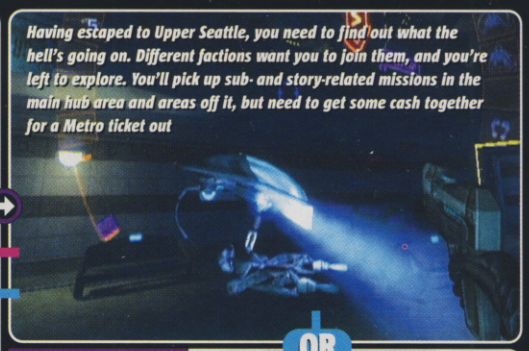
OR

## SHE ALEX

*We've made slinky she-Alex into Snake, minus the solid bit. Cloak, Thermal Masking and Walk Silent make her damn near invisible to humans and machines, while Bot Domination lets you take control of bots, cameras and gun turrets. If only we had that when we're pouring the pounds into SVC Chaos down the arcade...*




*Having escaped to Upper Seattle, you need to find out what the hell's going on. Different factions want you to join them, and you're left to explore. You'll pick up sub- and story-related missions in the main hub area and areas off it, but need to get some cash together for a Metro ticket out*

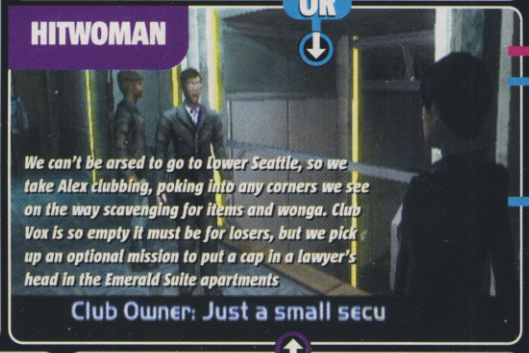


EITHER

OR

## HITWOMAN

*We can't be arsed to go to Lower Seattle, so we take Alex clubbing, poking into any corners we see on the way scavenging for items and wonga. Club Vox is so empty it must be for losers, but we pick up an optional mission to put a cap in a lawyer's head in the Emerald Suite apartments*

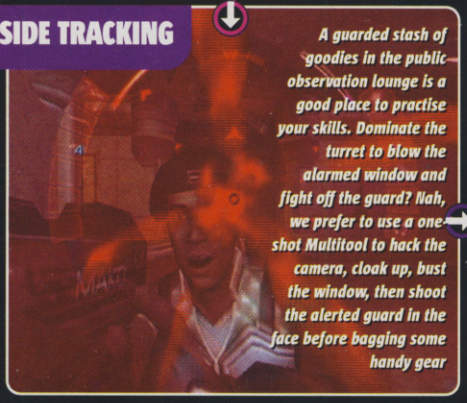



EITHER

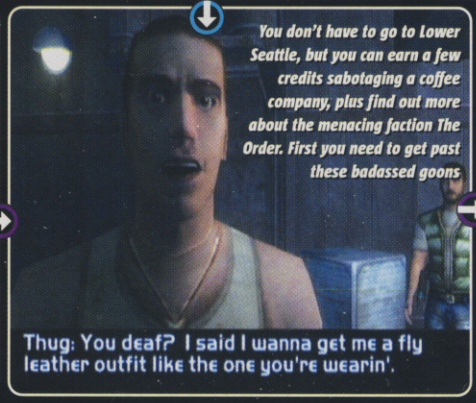
OR

## SIDE TRACKING

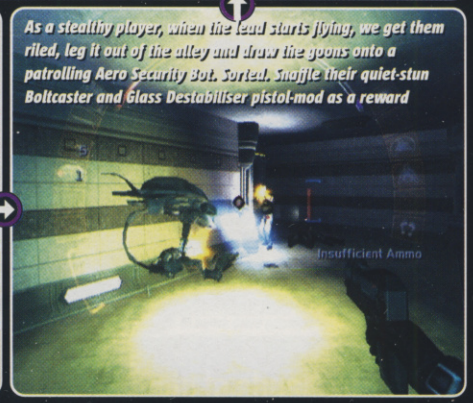
*A guarded stash of goodies in the public observation lounge is a good place to practise your skills. Dominate the turret to blow the alarmed window and fight off the guard? Nah, we prefer to use a one-shot Multitool to hack the camera, cloak up, bust the window, then shoot the alerted guard in the face before bagging some handy gear*



*You don't have to go to Lower Seattle, but you can earn a few credits sabotaging a coffee company, plus find out more about the menacing faction The Order. First you need to get past these badassed goons*

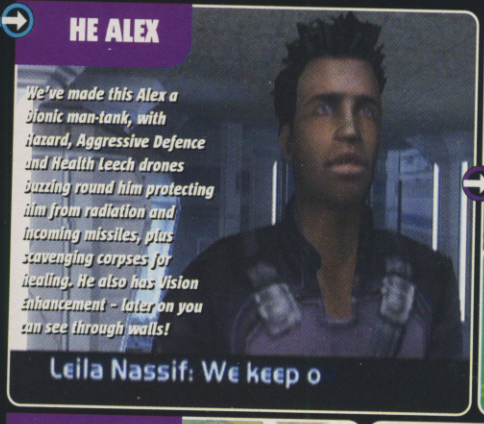



*As a stealthy player, when the lead starts flying, we get them riled, leg it out of the alley and draw the goons onto a patrolling Aero Security Bot. Sorted. Snaffle their quiet-stun Boltcaster and Glass Destabiliser pistol-mod as a reward*

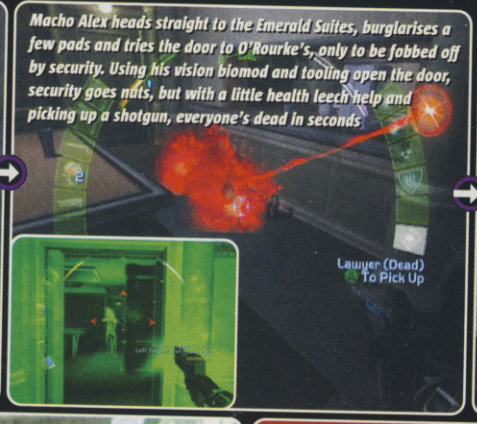



OR

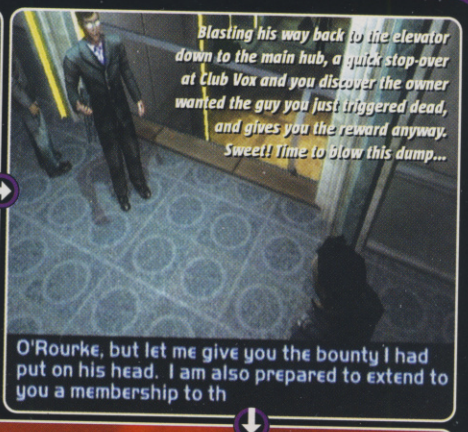
## HE ALEX




We've made this Alex a bionic man-tank, with Hazard, Aggressive Defence and Health Leech drones buzzing round him protecting him from radiation and incoming missiles, plus scavenging corpses for healing. He also has Vision Enhancement – later on you can see through walls!



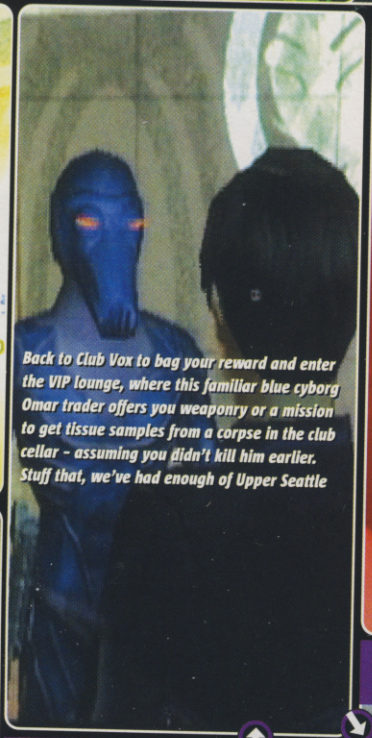

Macho Alex heads straight to the Emerald Suites, burglarises a few pads and tries the door to O'Rourke's, only to be fobbed off by security. Using his vision biomod and tooling open the door, security goes nuts, but with a little health leech help and picking up a shotgun, everyone's dead in seconds



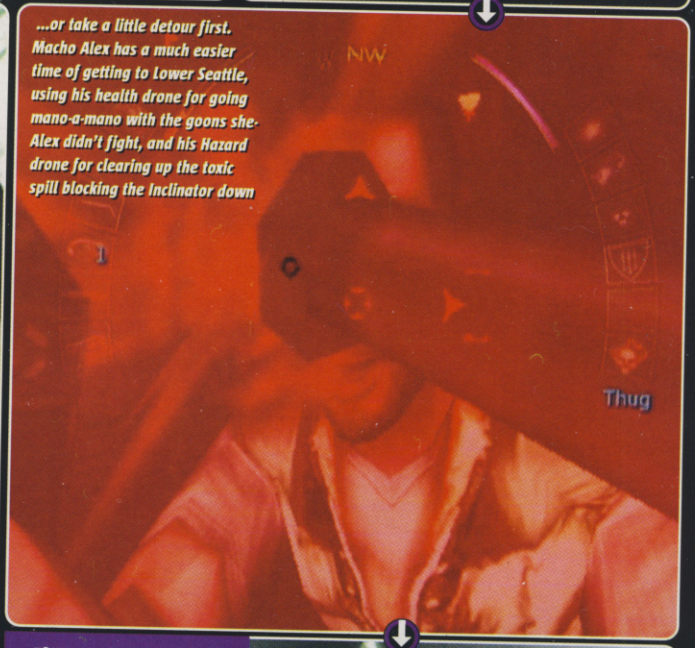

Blasting his way back to the elevator down to the main hub, a quick stop-over at Club Vox and you discover the owner wanted the guy you just triggered dead, and gives you the reward anyway. Sweet! Time to blow this dump...

## DOUBLE CROSS

We blag our way into the lawyer's pad and could easily gun him down, but 'fess up to the hit and O'Rourke hires us to head back to the club and take down one of the boss's VIP guests instead. Gunning this Star Wars rip-off down is a pleasure

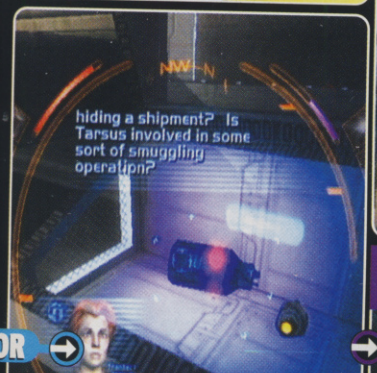


Back to Club Vox to bag your reward and enter the VIP lounge, where this familiar blue cyborg Omar trader offers you weaponry or a mission to get tissue samples from a corpse in the club cellar – assuming you didn't kill him earlier. Stuff that, we've had enough of Upper Seattle




...or take a little detour first. Macho Alex has a much easier time of getting to Lower Seattle, using his health drone for going mano-a-mano with the goons she-Alex didn't fight, and his Hazard drone for clearing up the toxic spill blocking the Inclinator down

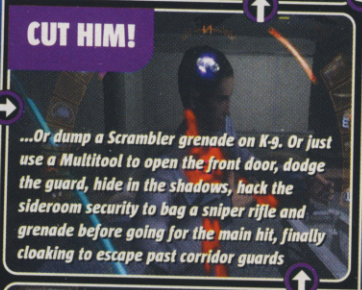
EITHER




OR

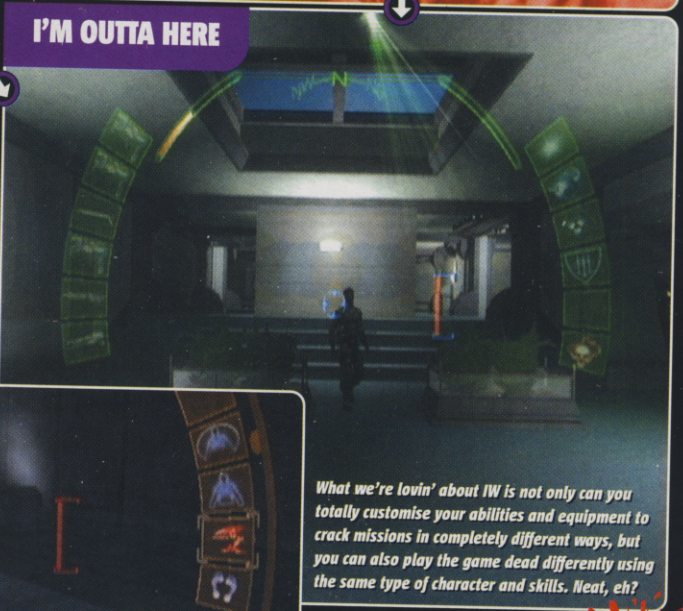
Luckily, it's in the same block that your old trainee buddy Billie Adams has directed you to to snoop on your former boss. We sneak in through airducts, dig up some interesting dirt, rifle more loot then head to the lawyer's pad

## CUT HIM!



...Or dump a Scrambler grenade on K-9. Or just use a Multitool to open the front door, dodge the guard, hide in the shadows, hack the sideroom security to bag a sniper rifle and grenade before going for the main hit, finally cloaking to escape past corridor guards

## I'M OUTTA HERE

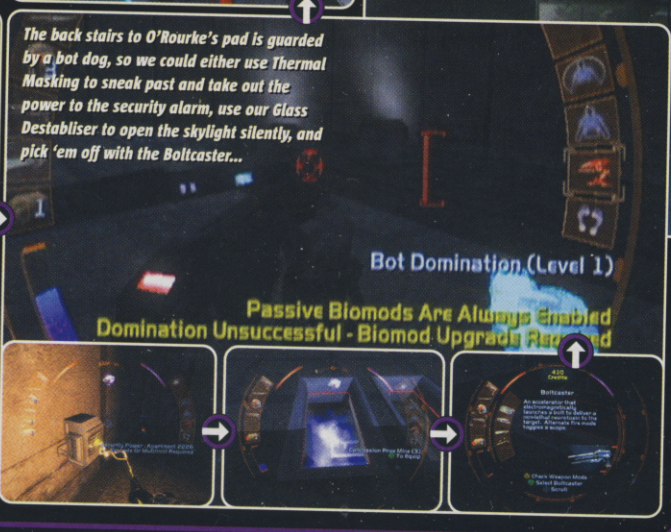


What we're lovin' about IW is not only can you totally customise your abilities and equipment to crack missions in completely different ways, but you can also play the game dead differently using the same type of character and skills. Neat, eh?

OR

## SNOOP DOG

Or take time out to sneak into the Penthouse either by airshafts or bribing the janitor. Dodge the trip lasers and mini guard-bots, and you pick up some more interesting clues for the WTO faction and another pistol-mod and a power blade. Mmm, finger-dicing good




The back stairs to O'Rourke's pad is guarded by a bot dog, so we could either use Thermal Masking to sneak past and take out the power to the security alarm, use our Glass Destabiliser to open the skylight silently, and pick 'em off with the Boltcaster...

### CVG OPINION

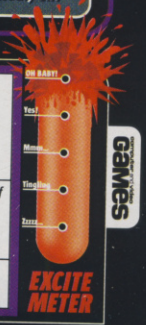
Like a child prodigy touched with genius, IW is currently so unpolished it's autistic. The 'focused' gameplay may not impress PC veterans. **Pete**

**WE LOVE**

- Choosing how, when, why and if to do missions
- Cool customised skills and weapons = replay

**WE HATE**

- Mission hub structure = snoreathon load times on Xbox



- PUBLISHER VIVENDI
- DEVELOPER BLACK ISLE
- OUT: DEC 2003

ONLINE GAMING

**IN A NUTSHELL**

The sequel to the hugely popular Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance sees you cutting a swathe through haunted forests and murky swamps, not to mention slicing up the massed forces of darkness. Sounds great to us!

AVAILABLE ON XBOX

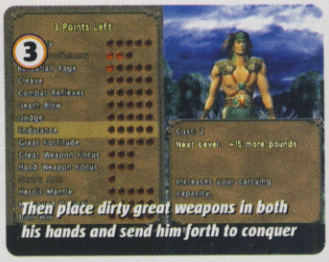
WWW.BGDA2.BLACKISLE.COM

## POINTS MAKE PRIZED FIGHTERS

Acquire points and build the ultimate warrior

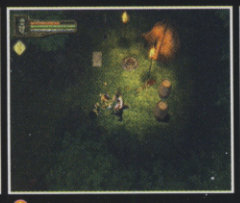
**Your band of warriors will only get so far on sinew and strength.**

To progress through all the foul regions BG:DA II has to offer you'll need to collect points and use these points wisely to enhance your characters' key attributes. You'll also need to select the right weapons and character for certain battles.

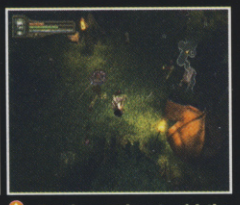



Then place dirty great weapons in both his hands and send him forth to conquer

Until you find a bow, you have to dodge archers



Tent security is taken seriously at the music festival



Use the crossbow to pick the trolls off one at a time

# Baldur's Gate™ Dark Alliance™ II

**Hack that grotty-looking giant to death! See that wizened old wizard? Stab him in the gizzard! Here are some Orcs. Put 'em to the sword!**

You're in the world of Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II (it's a bit like Gauntlet, or Diablo. Remember them? Doesn't matter if you don't) where RPG number-crunching meets finger-bleeding action. Imagine Dungeons & Dragons just came alive on your console and you're about there.

### SWINGING THE LEAD

So, pretty similar to the first instalment of Baldur's Gate, then? Yup. The developer blokeys seem like they're big fans of the principle 'if it aint broke don't fix it, just make it loads bigger'. Where the previous game offered some 40 levels, this one weighs in with around 80, and as well as the three playable characters from the first game, you now get another two to lead into battle.

The medieval maiming now lets you swing swords from both hands, like Anakin in Attack Of The Clones. This adds more depth to the game as you can choose your weapons from a huge arsenal that you acquire as you go. Different scenarios call for different combinations of weapons and occasionally different characters. The only problem we can see at this stage is one of taste; if RPG-style hack 'n' slashers aren't your thing this is unlikely to interest you too much. If, however, you love working out whether a particular battle is the domain of the Elf or the Necromancer this could be represent a king's bounty to you. CVG

This picture does not do justice to the beautiful effect of the moving water

Smash the barrels to reveal weapons and gold

The odds are heavily against the forces of good in Baldur

Reload the crossbow quickly, the next wave approaches

**CVG OPINION**

With more levels, characters and enemies, this promises to restore the lives of all those who suffered a on finishing the original game. **Paul A**

**WE LOVE**

- New players to choose from
- The environments and music
- Battling with two swords

**WE HATE**

- Not having an online option to take part in global battle
- Maybe too stats-based at times?

# MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN

■ PUBLISHER CAPCOM
■ DEVELOPER CAPCOM
■ OUT FEBRUARY 13

ONLINE GAMING

**IN A NUTSHELL**

Maximo looked the business but was so torturously difficult and mercilessly unforgiving that it didn't rake in much of a following with its PlayStation 2 debut. This sequel is less frustrating, and introduces a host of new ideas to spice up Capcom's arcade creature-beater.

AVAILABLE ON

PS2

WWW.CAPCOM.COM

**Prancing around wearing only your undercrackers and brandishing deadly steel is what dreams are made of. Twisted and slightly nightmarish dreams admittedly. However the birth of the Ghouls 'N' Ghosts universe back in 1988 suddenly propelled such eerie lunacy to the height of popularity.**

See, the original GNG arcade game made monster mashing funny as well as intensely challenging. It's this tongue-in-cheek attitude and dedication to hardcore gameplay that Maximo hoped to recreate in Capcom's 3D take on GNG.

Only, for all the visual virtues and satisfying slasher action, PS2's original ghoul fest was *way* too hard and suffered from poor structure.

## IN THE LINE OF FIRE

Gone is the dumb hub level layout of the last game. As is the insanely soul-destroying lack of save points. The Army Of Zin now follows a super-linear route, whereby you progress across a map on a definite journey annihilating angry evildoers from place to place. Plus you can save at any time throughout your adventure.

All this could have been enough, but Capcom has also made it easier to stay alive because there are far more health power-ups and pieces of armour to be found dotted throughout each stage. Plus you can now play as Grim, Death himself. He acts as a playable smart bomb that can be unleashed to slay multiple enemies with a few well-placed swipes. Sure these alterations make for a more seamless and faster-paced experience, but we're worried that it feels a little *too* easy now. It's still early days though.

The Army Of Zin throws more beasties at you than before, too. Now, you never go a few steps without being attacked from all sides by oddly inventive creatures, such as giant metal Terminator-types who fire their fists at you like heat-seeking missiles, kamikaze exploding insects, ghostly highwaymen and thieving ravens who nick off with your hard-earned coins.

Make sure to catch the first review in the next issue of CVG, when we'll be pulling out The Army Of Zin's gizzards and playing ping-pong with its kidney stones. CVG

## THINGS ARE GETTING GRIM

*Slay away until your Grim meter is fully charged. His bony mug will appear in the top left of the screen when he's ready to be unleashed. Hit the R1 button and you'll transform into Death. You're invincible in this state and can take lives willy-nilly for a few seconds*

## GOING FOR GOLD

*Maximo powers up by purchasing items from travelling merchants that he saves on his journey. Like if you want to unlock gold armour, you first have to buy a pair of shiny metal pants. Only the power of these magic undercrackers can unlock the ultimate bling-bling outfit*

*Maximo's cure for a blocked nose doesn't go down too well*

*Hammer time! Use this big sonuvabitch to wallop your enemies*

## CLIFFHANGER

*You undercook a jump across an abyss and plummet to your doom. However now you have a tiny safety net. If you come up short when leaping across a gap, Maximo stabs his weapon into the ledge. He'll hang there until you hit jump button, which pings him up to safety*

*Boss encounters look good, but their attacks are predictable and easy to learn at this stage*

**CVG OPINION**

This is Maximo's attempt to break into the mainstream. It's bigger and still as charming as before. Problem is, it could be too much of a pushover. **Mike**

**WE LOVE**

- *Heaps of hack 'n' slash mayhem*
- *Bonkers boss encounters*
- *Improved game structure*

**WE HATE**

- *It's too easy*
- *The Zin soldiers are a bit naff*
- *Not much room for exploration*

ON BABY! Test Mame Ting-Ting Razzz

MAX RUSH

# FIRE EMBLEM

■ PUBLISHER
NINTENDO
■ DEVELOPER
INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS
■ OUT: SPRING 2004

x4

**IN A NUTSHELL**

The developer of the Advance Wars games unleashes its mythical medieval masterpiece on the UK. Start massaging your craniums because the king of tactics is riding into town... on a flying horse.

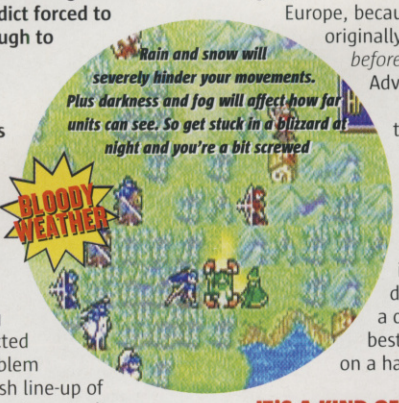
AVAILABLE ON
GAME BOY ADVANCE

WWW.FIREEMBLEM.GAMEBOY.COM

**Popping open a packet of Pringles. Switching on Advance Wars 2. These are critical moments when there's no turning back. You're trapped! An addict forced to see things through to the bitter end, whether it's reaching those last few crumbs or hanging Sturm out to dry in a final showdown.**

The world is full of stuff that we can't resist becoming helplessly addicted to, and Fire Emblem joins that devilish line-up of temptresses intent on stealing every second of spare time we have out of our hands.

This isn't as surprising as it sounds considering it's a game created by Intelligent Systems, the developer that brought us the Advance Wars series. What is surprising is that it's taken this long for Fire Emblem to appear in Europe, because it was originally released in Japan *before* the original Advance Wars.




Fire Emblem was the pioneer of that type of gameplay, but unlike its military cousin this magical epic is even more immersive, and dare we say it, a contender for best tactical battler on a handheld.

## IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC

This isn't just Advance Wars with knights and dragons instead of soldiers and helicopters, although there are similarities. The adventure is split into

**It's not all blades and bows. Fire Emblem is also awash with wizards going wild**

**You don't have to have violence in mind. Sometimes you can use your powers of persuasion**

## IN A DIFFERENT CLASS

In the Advance Wars series the abilities of your units always remain the same throughout the game.

But in Fire Emblem every unit gains experience points after engaging the enemy in combat, enabling them to level up, get stronger and gain new special abilities. Here's CVG's handy little guide to all the units in the game.

**START-UP CLASS**
**MYRMIDON**
Swordspersons using Eastern techniques of fighting

**LEVELLED UP**
**SWORD MASTER**
The ultimate blade-bearers, and masters of killer blows

**START-UP CLASS**
**NOMAD**
Mounted warriors from the East who are talented with bows

**LEVELLED UP**
**NOMADIC TROOPER**
Can use swords as well as bows while on horseback

**START-UP CLASS**
**MERCENARY**
Hired killers who choose to murder enemies with swords

**LEVELLED UP**
**HERO**
Significantly more powerful and can also use axes to kill

**START-UP CLASS**
**TROUBADOUR**
Mounted knights who are a dab hand with staves

**LEVELLED UP**
**VALKYRIE**
These guys possess the ability to use potent magic

**START-UP CLASS**
**PEGASUS KNIGHT**
These warriors saddle up on winged horses and use lances

**LEVELLED UP**
**FALCOKNIGHT**
Winged steed beneath them, these frequent fliers can use swords, too

**START-UP CLASS**
**WYVERN RIDER**
Beast-mounted knights specialising in lancing foes

**LEVELLED UP**
**WYVERN LORD**
These sinister units can deal out death with swords. Being on horseback helps, too

**START-UP CLASS**
**AXE FIGHTER**
These chunky fellas are sharp with an axe. Duh

**LEVELLED UP**
**WARRIOR**
Also good with choppers, but warriors are also capable of using bows

**START-UP CLASS**
**KNIGHT**
Heavy armoured warriors who are nifty with lances

**LEVELLED UP**
**GENERAL**
Super-knights. Massively talented with lances and axes

**START-UP CLASS**
**ARCHER**
Little blokes who are short-range masters of the bow and arrow

**SNIPER**
Dead-eyed Dicks. These guys are long-range experts with a bow

**START-UP CLASS**
**MAGE**
They use natural magic to overpower enemies

**LEVELLED UP**
**SAGE**
These über-wizards can also use staves in addition to their magic

**START-UP CLASS**
**SHAMAN**
Fear them. These blokes are masters of ancient magic

**LEVELLED UP**
**DRUID**
Stave-wielding master magicians. Magic and muscle. Ouch

**RELIGIOUS BODS**

**START-UP CLASS**
**CLERIC**
Priestesses gifted with magical abilities and specialising in staves

**START-UP CLASS**
**MONK**
These blokes are silent but deadly. They'll blat enemies with light magic

**LEVELLED UP**
**BISHOP**
Clerics or monks of the highest order. Masters with staves and light magic

**START-UP CLASS**
**CAVALIER**
Knights on horseback. Adept with swords and lances

**LEVELLED UP**
**PALADIN**
Badass cavaliers specialising in swords, lances and axes

**LORDS**

**ELIWOOD**
He's the son of Marquess Pherae and a swashbuckler

**LYN**
She's a bobby dazzler with a blade, and quite the looker

**HECTOR**
The brother of Marquess Ostia, and a tough axe man

**ENTERTAINERS**

**BARD**
Musicians who can grant others the ability to move again after their turn

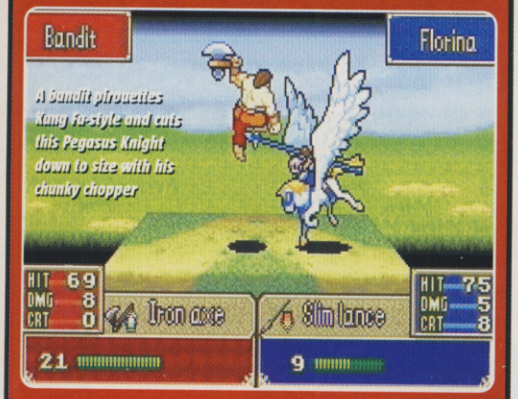
**DANCER**
Performers who can also bless characters with the power to move again

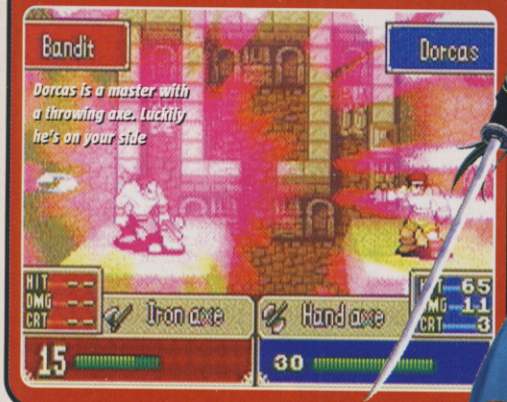
**THIEF**
Two-bit crooks, keen to skin other characters of their belongings. They're pretty good with swords

## FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!

**Whenever you lock horns in battle with another unit the action cuts to a 2D fight sequence.**

Whereas conflict cutscenes in Advance Wars are reasonably static, in Fire Emblem characters leap about and battle energetically giving you a real sense of drama. It's all a bit reminiscent of the clashes in the Golden Sun games.



Gain experience points. On 100 your unit levels up

Certain units can heal, but clerics are crap in combat

If you can move to the square next to another companion, both units can trade items, such as healing potions and even weapons

Fire Emblem's plot is riddled with twists, turns and nasty so-and-sos intent on making your life hell. Pay careful attention...

## JUST. CAN'T. STOP. PLAYING

**Intelligent Systems' trademark addictive gameplay formula is here in full force. You're never strong-armed to take a particular strategy.**

There are many ways to win, and lose. Trust your logic, be cunning and employ sneaky tactics as you engage in the challenging battle scenarios. When victory comes it's so sweet that it's virtually impossible not to continue playing...

There's a crack in the wall, so rather than confront the guards you take the side entrance

## HOUSE CALL

**Buildings in Fire Emblem aren't just for protecting and repairing units.**

Visit villages and speak to the locals for battle tips and advice. Often it's wise to trek across large and dangerous areas in order to pick up invaluable nuggets of information.

This old hag lets you in on a secret about the guarded fortress that you need to enter

Stop in at as many villages as you can, without putting your team at risk

chapters, each unit has specific strengths and abilities, but Fire Emblem is as much RPG adventure as intense strategy head-scratcher.

You have to juggle building a team, levelling up, changing classes, using magic, improving weapons and interacting with characters with brain teasing tactical battle action.

It's more complex than Advance Wars games, but in a good way. Even if you're not an RPG nut, it breaks you in slowly, teaching you everything you need to know in engaging scenarios throughout the quest. Plus managing your team is so satisfying that you soon fall in love with the mass of options you have at your disposal.

The only downside is that you'll have to fuel your addiction elsewhere for a few months, as Nintendo's fantasy won't be be available here until well into the New Year. Damn!

**CVG OPINION**

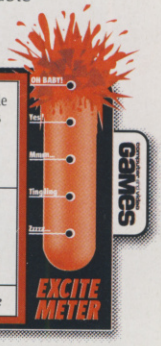
The blend of Advance Wars-style battle tactics and RPG action is addictive and massively entertaining. We can't wait till it hits the UK. **Mike**

**WE LOVE**

- Blinding battle scenarios and RPG elements
- Lots of tactical flexibility
- Top story and quality dialogue
- Multiplayer link-up play

**WE HATE**

- The graphics let it down a little

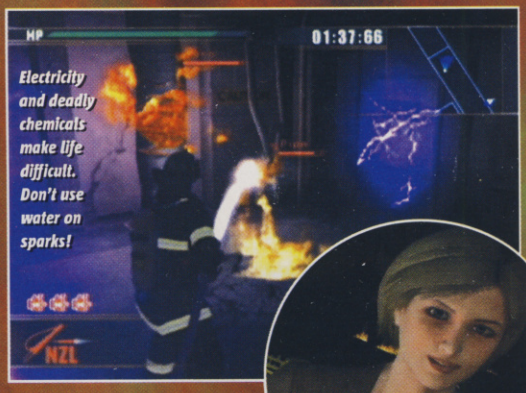


# FIREFIGHTER F.D.18

Dean can climb through ventilation ducts and elevator shafts to reach isolated areas

Get too close and you'll burn. Wiggle the sticks before you fry!

Backdraft! Flame-filled rooms spew torrents of fire through open doors



Electricity and deadly chemicals make life difficult. Don't use water on sparks!

Emilie here's the love interest. What's the point of being a fireman if there are no girls around?

- PUBLISHER KONAMI
- DEVELOPER KONAMI
- OUT: SPRING 2004
- ONLINE GAMING

**IN A NUTSHELL**

How does this sound? Konami transfers the Metal Gear experience to firefighting. Grab hold of your hose, twiddle with the nozzle, then spurt water, foam and gas all over a huge city under siege from a mad arsonist.

AVAILABLE ON PS2

WWW.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM

**Blazin' Squad? We wish they bloody were. Hopefully their collective on-stage bouncing will cause a spark that ignites their baggy polyester duds, engulfing them in a fireball of musical justice.**

And if they did go up, would we send in Dean McGregor in to douse the flames? Doubt it, because he's the firefighter of Konami's game, and he's got a burning desire to rescue anybody from a flame-grilling. Even spotty-arsed 'rappers' from London.

## SCORCHIO

You play stubbly-jawed Dean – Solid Snake in flame-retardant overalls – as he battles to rescue chargrilled survivors from towering infernos. The firefighting's done in a Metal Gear-style third-person view, with blazes raging in every direction.

The flames do look cool, but we're a bit suspicious about the way they spread in pre-determined patterns. Still, it is satisfying pumping gallons of suffocating aqua on their flickering arses. It's a bit like cleaning up the graffiti in Mario Sunshine, but with the added danger of burning your nutsack off.

## BURN BABY BURN

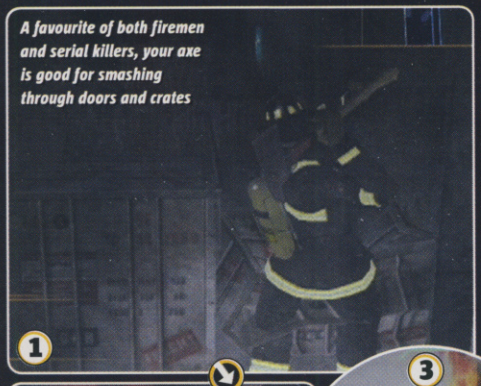
The first level takes place in a busy traffic tunnel stuffed full of burning cars. Flames dance vividly against the sooty concrete, and gagging smoke hangs in the air. It feels like playing the part of the hero in a big budget disaster movie.

Battling through the flames is cool and falling masonry, explosions and backdrafts keep the action fresh. Fire itself has been turned into the enemy, with raging blazes that behave like end-of-level bosses springing up at important moments.

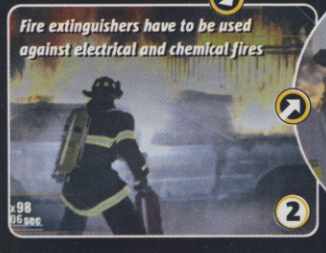
Our gut instinct is that saving people time after time will get boring and the dark, smoky graphics could end up looking incredibly dull. With those problems addressed Firefighter could prove to be the coolest game ever made about flames. CVG

## PIMPS AND HOSE

Every firefighter knows how to handle his hose, but in some situations you'll need to make use of other equipment unless you fancy a bit of Kentucky Fried Fireman. You axed for it...


A favourite of both firemen and serial killers, your axe is good for smashing through doors and crates

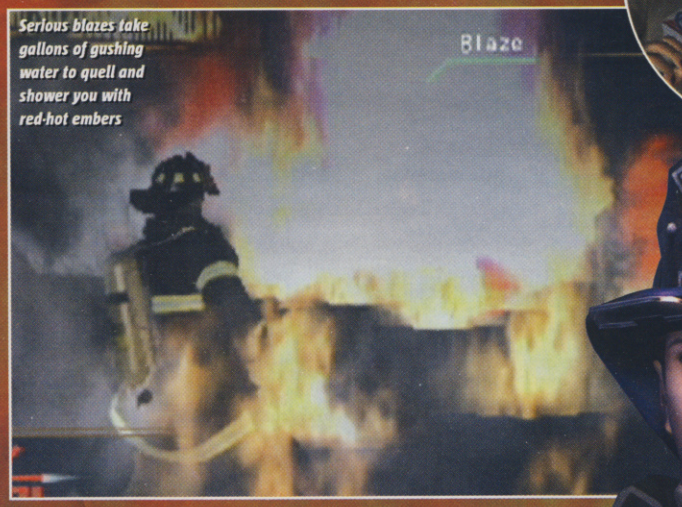
1


Fire extinguishers have to be used against electrical and chemical fires

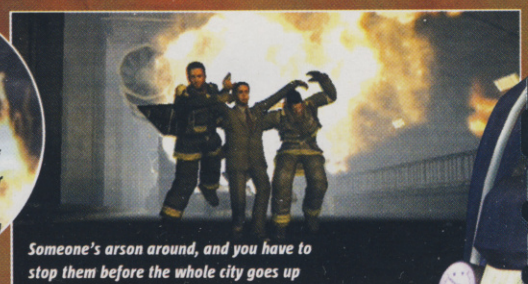
2

Caught up in the heat of the moment? Call in your partner to shoot off a room-drenching bazooka

3



Serious blazes take gallons of gushing water to quell and shower you with red-hot embers


Someone's arson around, and you have to stop them before the whole city goes up

**CVG OPINION**

This could light a fire under the adventure genre. Face it, you've always wanted to be a fireman, and this be the way to live out your dreams. **Graeme**

**WE LOVE**

- Being a fireman
- Fighting fires is fun
- Cool disaster movie settings

**WE HATE**

- Dark graphics all look the same
- Saving survivors gets boring
- Keeps you to a strict path

games UP IN FLAMES?

computer and video games
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# THE BEST GAMES OF THE YEAR

## THE 2003 WINNERS REVEALED...

**PS2 Game of the Year**
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

**GameCube Game of the Year**
The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker

**Handheld Game of the Year**
Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising

**Xbox Game of the Year**
Star Wars: Knights Of The Old Republic

**PC Game of the Year**
Championship Manager 4

**Online Game of the Year**
Battlefield 1942

**MTV Film Adaptation of the Year**
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

**The Daily Mirror's Best of British**
Championship Manager 4

**Publisher of the Year**
Nintendo

**Retailer of the Year**
GAME

**Hardware of the Year**
Game Boy Advance SP

**Unsung Hero: Game of the Year**
Viewtiful Joe

**Hall of Fame Industry Personality of the Year**
Shigeru Miyamoto

**Editors' Game of the Year**
Pro Evolution Soccer 3

**Most Wanted Game for Christmas**
Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

**Most Anticipated Game for 2004**
Half-Life 2

**Ultimate Game of the Year**
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

Sponsored by: EA ELECTRONIC ARTS, macrovision, N-GAGE NOKIA, sonopress Content to Market, VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

In association with: MTV MUSIC TELEVISION®

Retail Sponsor: GAME

# FAR CRY

## DEATHMATCH IN PARADISE

**Like any PC shooter, Far Cry has a bunch of multiplayer options to keep you busy, though in this case there are just three online modes: deathmatch, team deathmatch, and assault.**

Other than this, the developers are hoping the fans will fill in the gaps with the built-in level editor... Cheeky sods!

Five of the vehicles from the solo campaign are also available in multiplayer

Assault is a team-based game in which one team attacks an objective and the other defends it, a bit like Wolfenstein: Enemy Territory

Typical! Paid killers always get the best spots on the beach

■ PUBLISHER
UBISOFT
■ DEVELOPER
CRYTEK
■ OUT: FEB 27 2004

ONLINE GAMING x32

**IN A NUTSHELL**

It used to be paradise – until you actually got there. Now it's hell, as you take on an island full of mercenaries with big guns and loads of tactical smarts.

AVAILABLE ON PC CD ROM

WWW.FARCRYTHEGAME.COM

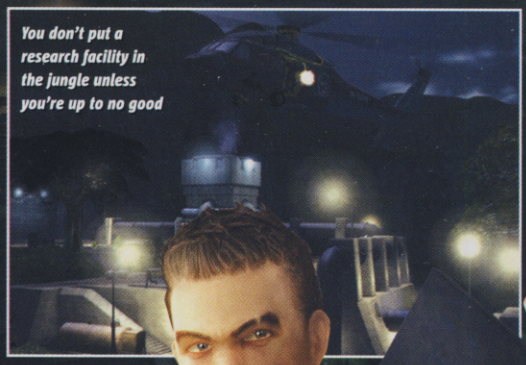
**As gamers, we spend a worrying amount of time trudging through places that are, frankly, a bit yucky. Whether it's sewers, dungeons, corpse-riddled trenches or the sulphurous pits of hell itself, we've all been there and had its filth splattered on our jodhpurs.**

If, like us, you're a bit fed up with the dry-cleaning bills, feast your world-weary eyes on Far Cry. Set in a tropical island paradise, it's about as far from hell as a first-person shooter can get (an – ahem – 'far cry' from it, in fact).

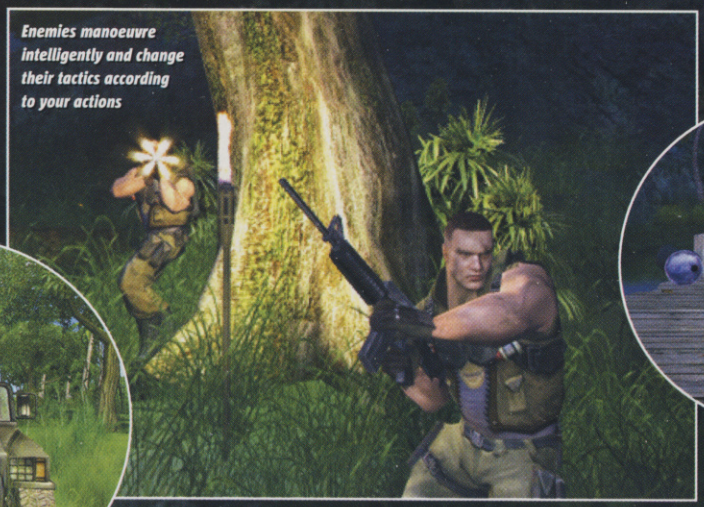
The sun-drenched beaches and crystal waters are straight out of a holiday catalogue, and if it weren't for the hordes of mercenary scum and strange mutant creatures we'd be booking our flights right now.

### HUMMER DINGER

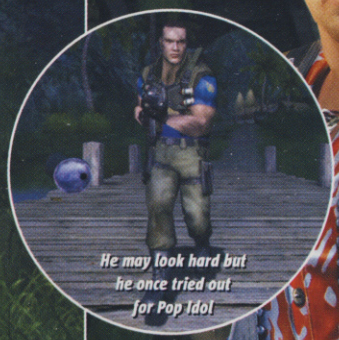
Aside from looking a million bucks, Far Cry has really impressed us with its intelligent gameplay – the enemies are some of the smartest we've ever seen. Picking up where Halo left off, the bad guys work together to



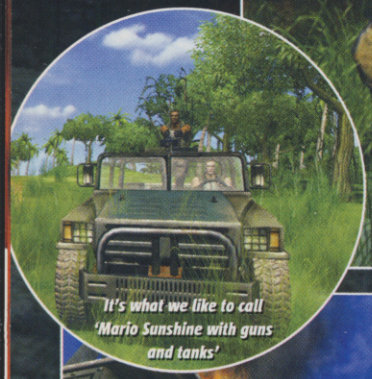
You don't put a research facility in the jungle unless you're up to no good



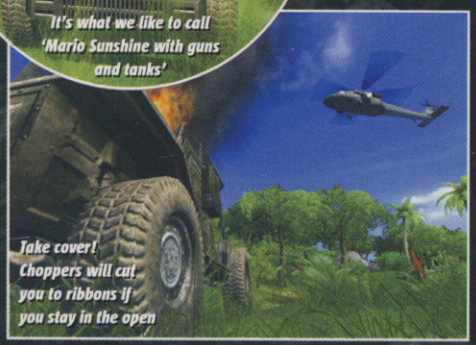
Enemies manoeuvre intelligently and change their tactics according to your actions



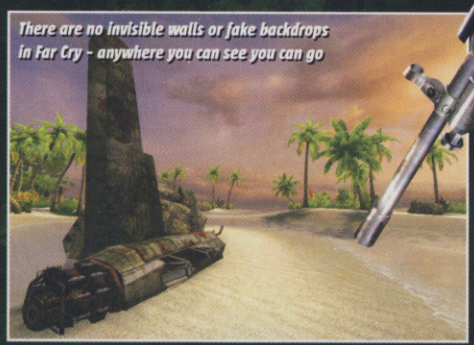
He may look hard but he once tried out for Pop Idol



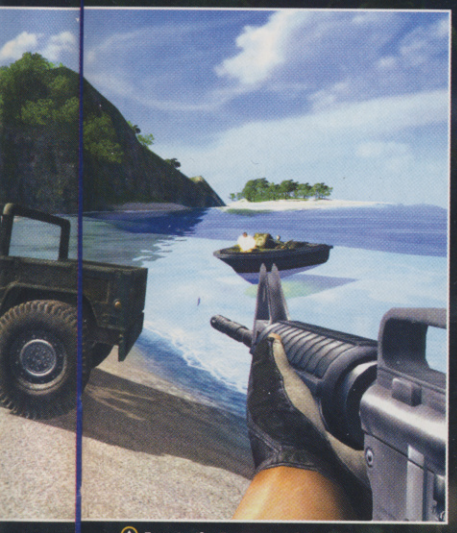
It's what we like to call 'Mario Sunshine with guns and tanks'



Take cover! Choppers will cut you to ribbons if you stay in the open



There are no invisible walls or fake backdrops in Far Cry – anywhere you can see you can go



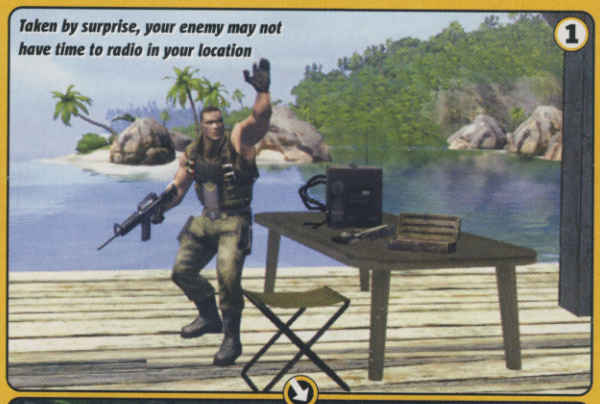
True to the Dr Moreau-ish setting, the plot involves bizarre mutants and evil scientists

They may be good with guns, but they're rubbish at jeep maintenance

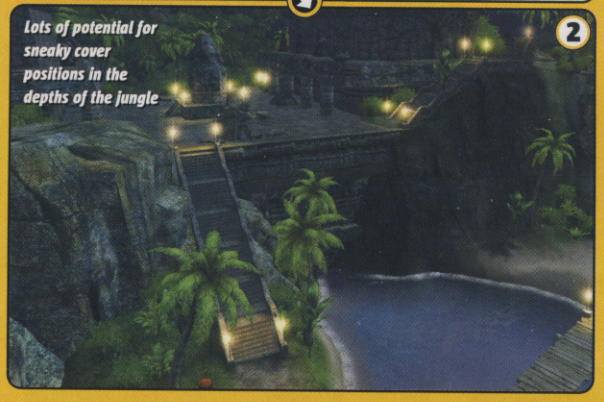
## WISE GUYS

**The enemies in Far Cry react dynamically to your actions, so a level will play out completely differently every time you try it.**

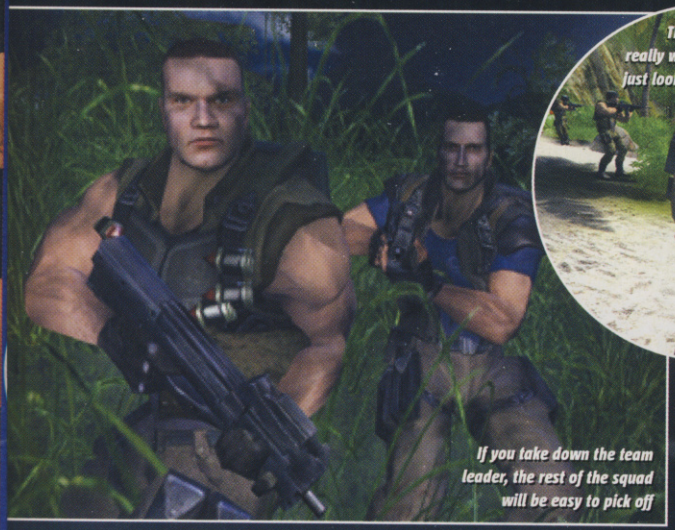
Trying to mow them down in open combat will get you killed nine times out of ten, so you're going to have to think about stealth, sniping, and natural cover.



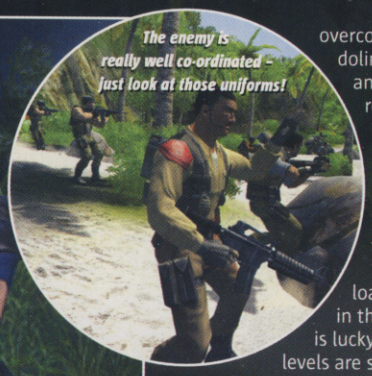

Taken by surprise, your enemy may not have time to radio in your location




Lots of potential for sneaky cover positions in the depths of the jungle



If you take down the team leader, the rest of the squad will be easy to pick off



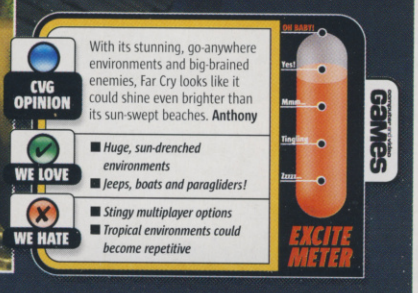
The enemy is really well co-ordinated – just look at those uniforms!

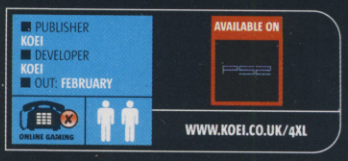
overcome you, doling out orders and calling in reinforcements when needed – unless you can take down the guy with the radio or the flare in his hand.

There are also loads of vehicles in the game, which is lucky seeing as the levels are so huge. Some of these are your basic jeeps and humvees, but there's also a selection of nippy boats, a forklift and the super-cool paraglider. You're free to use these to explore the islands as you please, and there are no invisible walls anywhere to stop you – anywhere you can see you can go (though you'll eventually get eaten by sharks if you swim too far out to sea).

Combine all this with an action-packed storyline and a bunch of high-powered weapons and you've got yourself one hell of a tropical holiday – check the next issue of CVG for our official verdict.

Squad leaders can be spotted by their microphone headsets and dashing moustaches

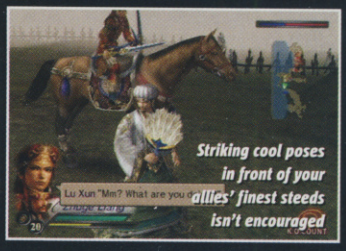



# DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 XTREME LEGENDS

While it may sound like some poncey bunch of nob-headed boy band muppets, 4XL is actually what they're calling the latest in the long line of Dynasty Warriors games. A sort of add-on pack where you don't need the original game to play, this contains new stages, bonus features and extra weaponry to exact bloody vengeance on your enemy.

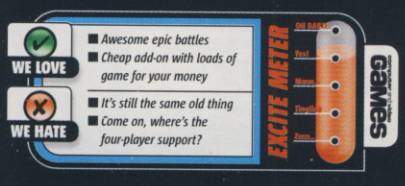
Also new are skirmish levels in Xtreme Mode, which feature randomly generated maps and enemy waves, and there are beat 'em up-style one-on-one duels, too. The game is playable as a standalone adventure, but if you own the original, you can import saves so your previous efforts aren't wasted. Plus you can boost the original game with 4XL's special new features. Neat, even if it is another cheeky squeeze of Dynasty Warrior's well-worn teat.



Striking cool poses in front of your allies' finest steeds isn't encouraged

Visuals are more spectacular in motion, as ever with DW

Pang Tong is one of our favourites, even if he does need to go on the Atkins' diet



PUBLISHER JALECO
DEVELOPER JALECO
OUT: FEB/MAR 04
AVAILABLE ON PS2
ALSO ON XBOX CUBE
ONLINE GAMING
WWW.GOBLINCOMMANDER.COM

# GOBLIN COMMANDER: UNLEASH THE HORDE

**Taking the steaming log out of logistics, Goblin Commander kicks ass-achingly monotonous mega base-building down the dunny. You only ever control a handful of buildings plus up to three clans assigned a button each; smashing up the scenery for gold and killing enemies for souls are all the resource management you need.**

Controlling key structures around the map quickly and the right balance of unique units in each ten-strong clan is the secret of success. You can switch to a goblin's eye view of events or take direct control of special Titan beasts to crush wee goblins in gruesome ways. Setting waypoints is about as fiddly as it gets – you're never meant to be more than a few moments away from the action.

Goblin Commander is going at it the right way round – a made-for-console RTS borrowing some cool ideas from PC games but not trying to plug square ideas into round ports. The fantasy theme and badger-bearded name may turn some off, but if anything can convert the console faithful to strategy heresy, it'll be the keep-it-fast-and-simple religion of games like this.

*The brains behind Goblin include ex-Blizzard talent the Millar brothers*

*He's having a bit of trouble with his joints*

*Not online, but split-screen's much more than a mere afterthought*

WE LOVE
- Console strategy that isn't slow and dull
- Um, it's fast?

WE HATE
- Not everyone's a goblin fan
- Dissolve goblins with a giant green blob? Yes please

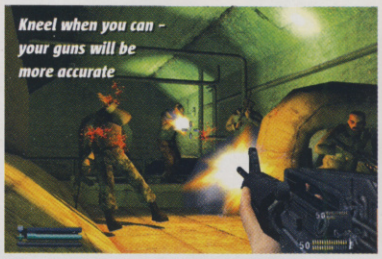
EXCITE METER

## BUST OUT THE CATTLE PROD

**Cold Winter's cutscenes are scripted by class comic book writer Warren Ellis and look cool as a pint of liquid nitrogen on the rocks.**

In the opening, the camera zooms like a spy satellite on a rollercoaster from above Earth way down to ground level, to reveal Sterling being carted into the Chinese jail you start the game in. And clock the camera angles on this... if you can tear your eyes off the gore.

# COLD WINTER



*Kneel when you can - your guns will be more accurate*

PUBLISHER VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
DEVELOPER SWORDFISH STUDIOS
OUT: WINTER 2004
ONLINE GAMING x4

**IN A NUTSHELL**

Spy shooter from the ex-Rage talent behind Hostile Waters, packed with cool ideas and good intentions to do the unpredictable. Expect a stack of standout features and much spillage of blood and guts. What's with the lame title, though?

AVAILABLE ON PS2

WWW.COLDWINTER.COM

**Oi, wanna make some money? Then help us make the most realistic game ever, where players only get one life. Died in training? Tough titties, Game Over, permanently – go spend £40 on another copy of our game to play again.**

Kind of like the original arcade Dragon's Lair, only not crap. Best of all, we'll all get *hugely* rich. But while waiting for that, we've gotta rely on Swordfish's new PS2 exclusive to bust out new ideas for a spy shooter that'll stand out like split-crotch panties on a horny rhino.

Cold Winter has its sights set on no less than being GoldenEye 2004, only after Manhunt's James Earl Cash has surgically removed Bond with a broken bottle and dribbled his own sick little touches across the action.

### HUMAN BOMB FACTORY

You won't see 007 hacking enemies' head's off to use their eyes to get through retinal-scanned doors Blade Runner-style, nor sweet gadgetry in a Bond game that lets you combine items like money and poison for scattering fatal temptation under greedy guards' noses.

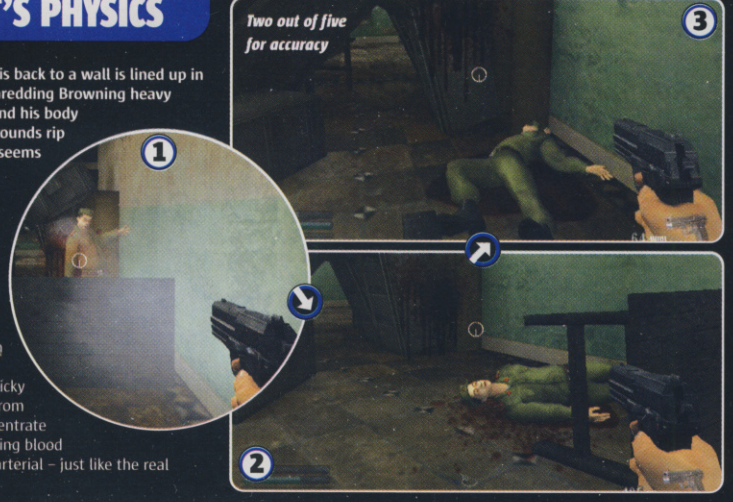
Strip bodies for rags, siphon petrol from generators and rob empty bottles to create Molotov cocktails, or maybe mix plastic explosives with a motion sensor and some industrial gum to

## BLOODY HELL, IT'S PHYSICS

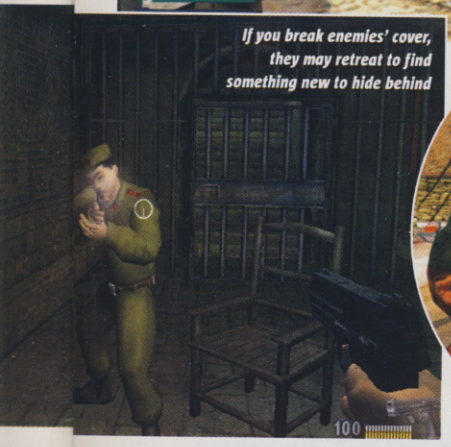
**Picture this. A helpless guard with his back to a wall is lined up in the sights of your fearsome, flesh-shredding Browning heavy machine gun. You pull the trigger, and his body twitches spastically as hundreds of rounds rip him into sausage meat. The torture seems to last ages. It *does* last ages.**

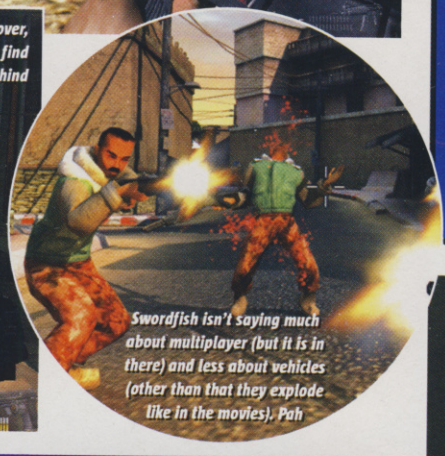
Y'see, he can't die, as he's a specially designed victim in a test room for Cold Winter's weapons and physics, whose sole reason in life (and death) is to impress on us how disgustingly well the physics of spurting blood works. And it does, oh yes.

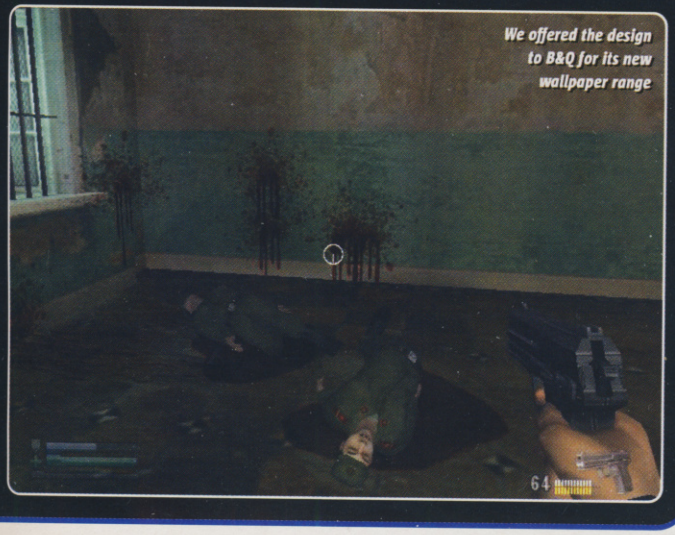
A few shots tearing through flesh splatter the red stuff liberally on the wall behind, with the main pool of sticky goo thinning out as you get further from the central point of impact. But concentrate your fire on the body part and the flying blood thickens, becomes darker red, more arterial – just like the real thing, dribbling down with gravity.



Real-world physics let you pick up, move or bust up hundreds of objects in every level


If you break enemies' cover, they may retreat to find something new to hide behind

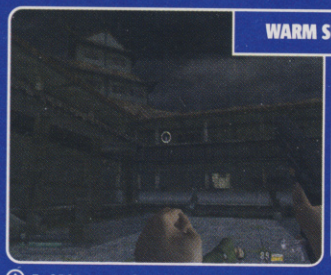

Swordfish isn't saying much about multiplayer (but it is in there) and less about vehicles (other than that they explode like in the movies). Pah

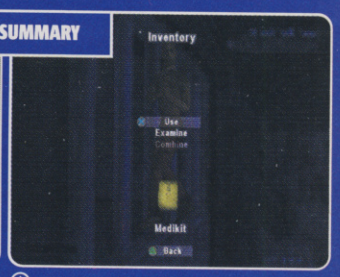

We offered the design to B&Q for its new wallpaper range

## MEDI-PACK IT IN

**Even the best players take damage, and Cold Winter deals with Health issues like a New Age crystal therapist.** The medicine on offer here is a bit more alternative, abolishing the traditional shooter pick-up system and going more Getaway. We've not seen enough of the game to know how well it works, but it's either going to be very brave, or dead dumb.

### WARM SUMMARY

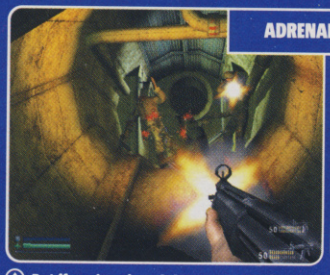





Ex-SAS man Andrew Sterling takes a ten-second breather where he can break out his permanent health pack for full healing, cos...

...if you've taken too many critical hits and don't heal soon, you'll bleed to death. Did we mention the sicko-sweet blood effects?

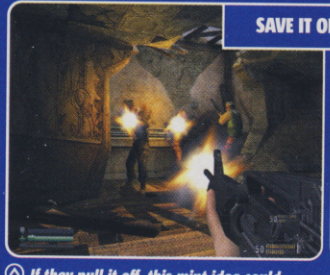
### ADRENALIN VAULT



But if you're pinned down, on your last drop of blood and unable to break to heal, Cold Winter rewards you for going berserk...

...providing you're skilful with it. Take out enough goons and you top out your adrenalin meter, which recharges your health. Neat!

### SAVE IT OR BRAVE IT



If they pull it off, this mint idea could make for spectacular turn-arounds, forcing you to be a proper hardnut action hero

Just remember, you can't rely on Quicksave to help after failed heroics - Cold Winter uses a checkpoint system

It's not just you that can kick over tables to create cover... gonna get you anyway sucker

Need to get into a building? Search around for the ingredients make yourself a lockpick

make a wall-mounted booby trap. It's as inventive as you are.

But that's not the only thing getting us hot. There's also the resourceful AI that makes enemies hug cover properly. You can create your own hiding places by kicking over tables or using boxes as shields, and block doors with tables Half-Life-style. And check what they're doing with the Health and Save systems (see Bloody Hell, It's Physics boxout).

Then there's the risky game structure: split into three parts, you can finish in several hours without seeing the other two parts. But play all three and you'll discover how it all ties together into one big spy thriller plot.

Like all the other standout features, this sounds intriguing, but since Cold Winter is still quite a way off, precisely how it'll be implemented is still being finalised. But if they pull it off, you can stick Bond up EA's Blofeld. CVG

**CVG OPINION**

Any game aiming to be GoldenEye 2004 deserves your attention. If it fails to deliver, we'll draw straws on who gets to cut its head off. **Pete**

**WE LOVE**

- Yes! Summat different at last
- Pile up bodies! Hack off heads!
- DIY bombs!

**WE HATE**

- If the Health/save/aim assist ideas are done wrong, this could end up too easy and short

PUBLISHER
SONY
DEVELOPER
NAMCO
OUT: FEBRUARY

ONLINE GAMING

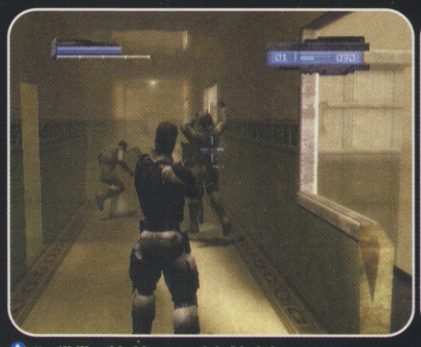
**IN A NUTSHELL**

Once again you're a one-man army, and once again, there are literally fahsands of enemy scum to kill. This time, however, there's as much focus on taking strategic cover as letting rip with the bullets and bombs.

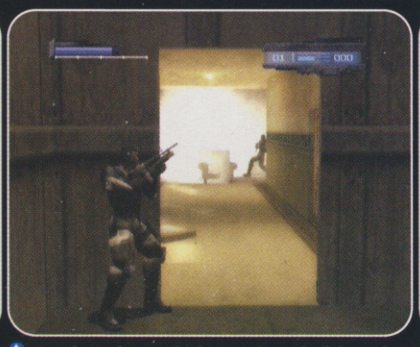
AVAILABLE ON
PS2

ALSO ON
XBOX, PC

WWW.KILLSWITCH.COM



You'll like this bit – sneak behind these geezers using the outside ledge then rip up their backsides



More bangs for your buck. Grenades make light work of the enemy in close confines but remember to take cover

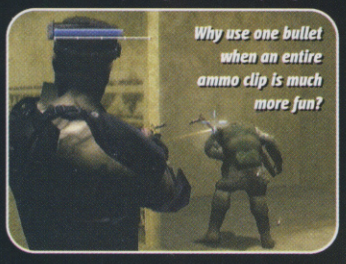
Check out your hero. He's part Solid Snake, part SAS man Chris Ryan, and with oddly enormous hands...

# KILL SWITCH

**Forget all that 'War is hell' rubbish, videogame war is a total laugh. All that gut-spilling and bullet-spraying makes for the perfect thumb-bustin' game.**

But, when you're taking slugs in Kill Switch, it's not adrenaline that drives you on, it's confusion: why are you getting peppered with lead? Who's shooting at you? And where the hell is your back-up?! We can't answer the first two questions because it'd spoil the game, but the third, where are the reinforcements? Sorry son, you're on your own. Guess you've got to take on an entire army single-handedly. Again.

Touch my bullet belt? I fill you with lead"



Why use one bullet when an entire ammo clip is much more fun?

## GET OFFENSIVE

After a few sleepy training missions it becomes clear that Kill Switch is a gaming flash grenade ready to crisp your skin and roast your innards. Your unnamed and mysterious hero is a tooled-up psycho, armed with sub-machineguns, sniper rifles, and grenades with which to tackle the game's enemy-packed, relentlessly varied missions.

The two analgue sticks give you total control on the battefield, one for running and turning, the other to strafe and looking. Hold the right trigger and a stream of lead shoots from your hand cannon, while the left activates the game's 'offensive cover system' – Kill Switch's big new idea, and the thing that sets it apart from the rest of the gun-toting pack.

## DUCK, COVER 'N' KILL

To take cover, push up against a wall or obstacle and squeeze the left trigger.

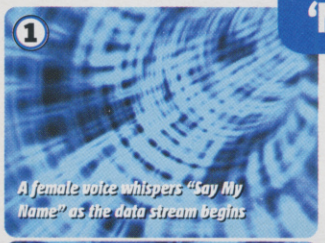
Enemies use the same rules of cover as you, sneaky so-and-sos

## 'NEVER, I TELL YOU!'

**Twist our arms and attach electrodes to our nips, but we won't tell you about the story. Why? Because we're stingy gits!**

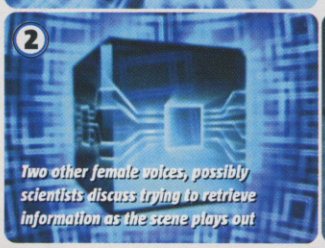
Actually, it'd spoil the fun. And there's no info in the manual other than for the controls, either. Instead, the plot unravels in cutscenes at the beginning of each mission, showing you a bit more of the story each time, making you gag for more.

1



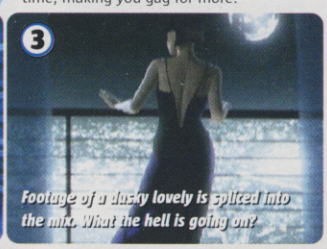
A female voice whispers "Say My Name" as the data stream begins

2

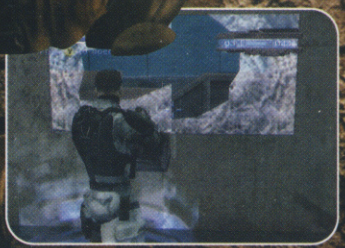


Two other female voices, possibly scientists discuss trying to retrieve information as the scene plays out

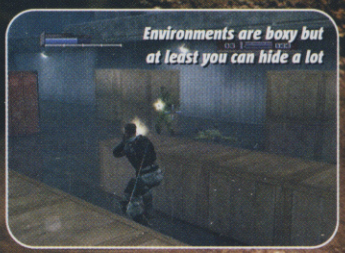
3



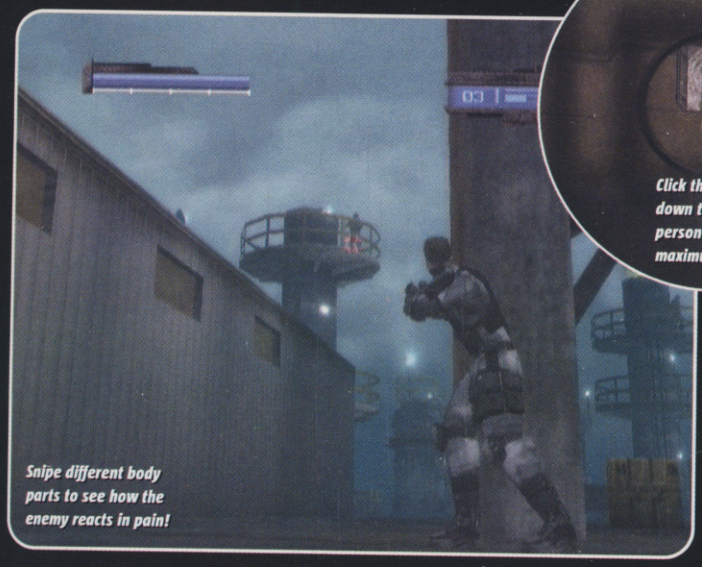
Footage of a dusky lovely is spliced into the mix. What the hell is going on?

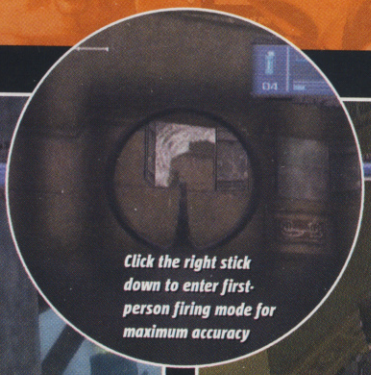


Locate these swirling mission points to interact with important devices



Environments are boxy but at least you can hide a lot


Snipe different body parts to see how the enemy reacts in pain!


Click the right stick down to enter first-person firing mode for maximum accuracy

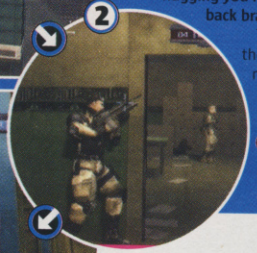
Yeah, you a bad ass! Shame there's no blood spraying about the place

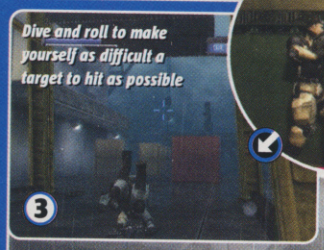
## UNDER THE COVERS

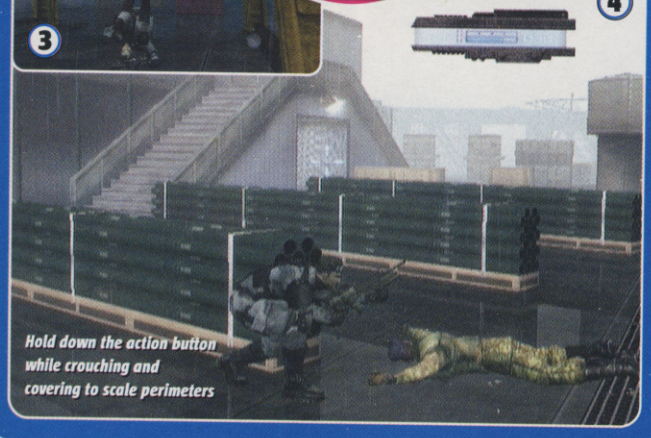
Poor you. Supposing you make it through the tough missions ahead and can unravel the mystery of the war in which you play such a key part, you do so much crouching and wall hugging you're guaranteed to need a back brace in old age.

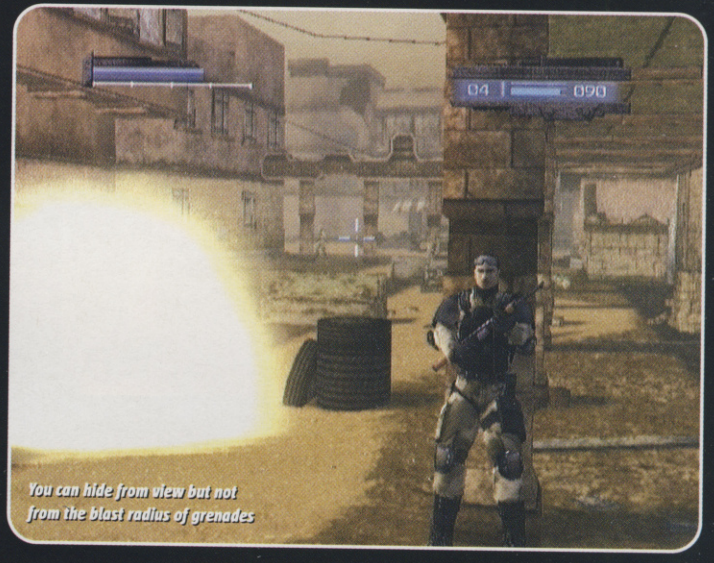
This game features one of the most advanced sets of moves for tactical duck and cover manoeuvres, ever. Believe it.

1 Blind fire isn't accurate but at least you stay covered


2 Listen in to guards talking before robbing them of their lives

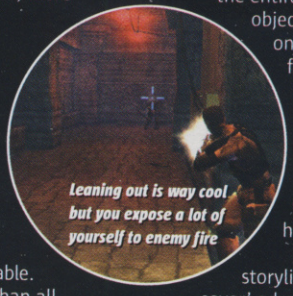

3 Dive and roll to make yourself as difficult a target to hit as possible


4 Hold down the action button while crouching and covering to scale perimeters


You can hide from view but not from the blast radius of grenades

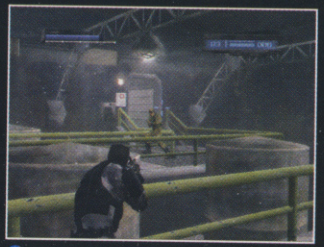
Secondary fire from your guns includes devastating grenades and rockets

You'll 'stick' to the object or, if it's only waist height, crouch while hugging the surface. You can move freely behind cover like this and, more importantly, fire at the enemy from a safe position. Duck out and you'll fire a blind spray of bullets. If you want maximum bloodshed aim with the right stick while leaning out – it's more accurate, but reveals more of you from your hiding spot, leaving you more vulnerable.


Leaning out is way cool but you expose a lot of yourself to enemy fire

What's even better than all this sneaky leaning and sniping is the fact you can leap from one place of cover to the next, simply by tapping the action button. You'll make a spectacular bullet-dodging dive and if you press the button again, instantly grip against the next available cover surface. You can even crawl around the entire perimeter of an object rather than just on one side of it. All cool features, and invaluable given the sheer number and scarily realistic artificial intelligence of the enemy wanting to turn you into a human tea strainer.

So, with its gripping storyline and 'duck and cover' adrenaline junkie action, Kill Switch promises to be an exceptional stealth shooter up there with Metal Gear. It packs a hell of a challenge too. Shame it doesn't look quite as nice as it plays, though. CVG


Silly boy! Railings don't provide cover

**CVG OPINION**

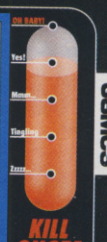
The way the story plays, coupled with teeth-gnashing action, makes this stand out nicely from the ever-expanding crowd of war 'em ups. **Lee**

**WE LOVE**

- Leaping between cover points
- Adrenaline overload
- It's tough, just like 50 Cent

**WE HATE**

- The visuals aren't all that special
- Save points a bit too far apart?
- Maybe a too-artsy narrative style



KILL QUOTA

# GOTCHA FORCE

- PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
- DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
- OUT: FEB 2004
- ONLINE GAMING
- x4

**IN A NUTSHELL**

Arena-based battle action with palm-sized machines known as 'Gotcha Borgs'. Fight armies of bots and collect new parts to upgrade your own, alone or with up to three others.

AVAILABLE ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE

WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM

## FIRE IN THE PLAYGROUND

**With such devastating and destructive action it's easy to forget your mega-mechs are teeny enough to nestle in your pocket.**

Battles take place in everyday places like playgrounds and sandpits, but are as spectacular as intergalactic showdowns.

That big ball of white-hot flame used to be your enemy. Yes!

The camera whizzes around your hero as you perform mêlée attacks

The detail on your robotic toy fighters is ace

The game doesn't let you shoot allies by 'mistake' – no fun!

Some of your later upgrades and bolt-ons are mega-powerful

The baleful empty stares of defeat on your enemies' faces make it all worthwhile

This needle nurse is very Gregory Horror

Battles take place on desks but no one even notices

**Wait a minute, isn't this game supposed to be aimed at the little 'uns? So how come the joypad is rumbling fit to explode? How come the screen cracks wide open as sparks rip through the glass and into your eyeballs. Never mind the kids, this could well be as meaty as mechanised multiplayer gaming gets on GameCube.**

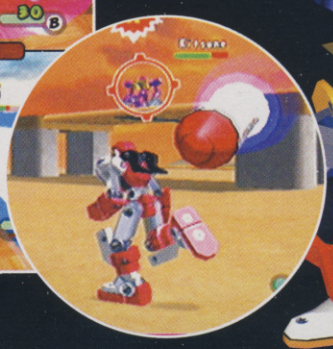
### BITE MY SHINY METAL ASS

The idea is simple: befriend and collect miniature robots and send them into battle against the evil robotic menace running amok across town. Your bots can jump, run and shoot, as well as perform combos of melee attacks when you're close enough to smell the enemy's motor oil. As you progress through the battles you recruit more robotic buddies to your cause. There are over 200 different bots to select and destroy in battle, plus loads of upgrade parts to truly customise your squad. We played for ages and still only scratched the surface of what this side of the game should offer.

What's even cooler is that you can save your lovingly crafted pint-sized machines of death to memory card and trade parts and bots with friends, as well as enter multiplayer tournaments. The only potential spanner in this game's workings is the less-than-spectacular background visuals, but we reckon there'll be more than enough thunderous explosions rocking the screen (and your world) to help you forget these.

Gather your homies togehter and four-player craziness abounds

Incoming! Jump or dash out of the way to avoid getting kissy with rockets



**CVG OPINION**

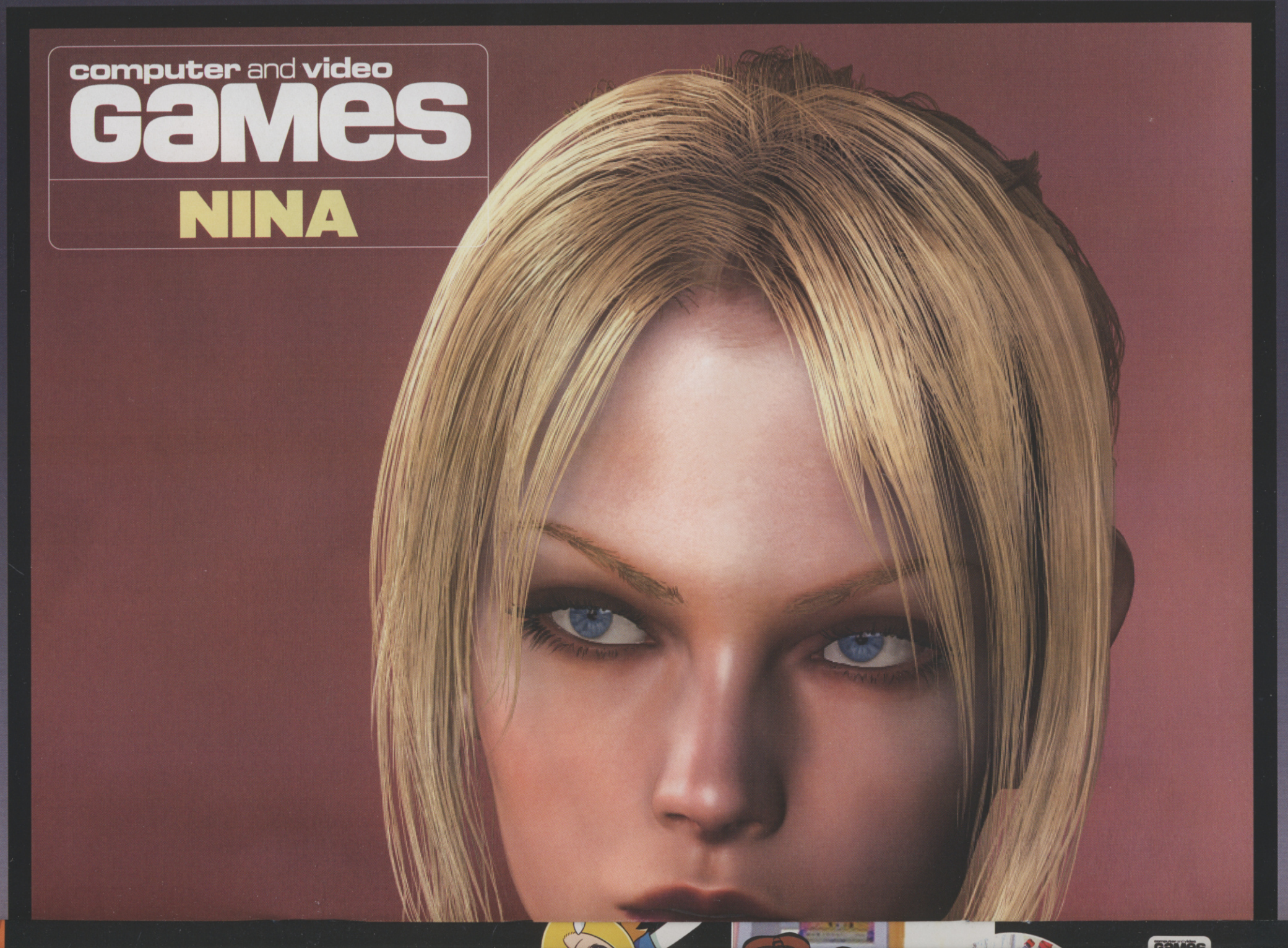
It's simple and aimed at kiddies, but this already looks like it'll provide mental mech action at its finest – for all ages. Might get a bit samey, though. **Lee**

**WE LOVE**

- So much firepower
- New mechs and upgrades
- Stupidly fast and smooth

**WE HATE**

- It's fairly simplistic after all
- Battle arenas not too interactive
- ...and they look a bit cacka too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PAL

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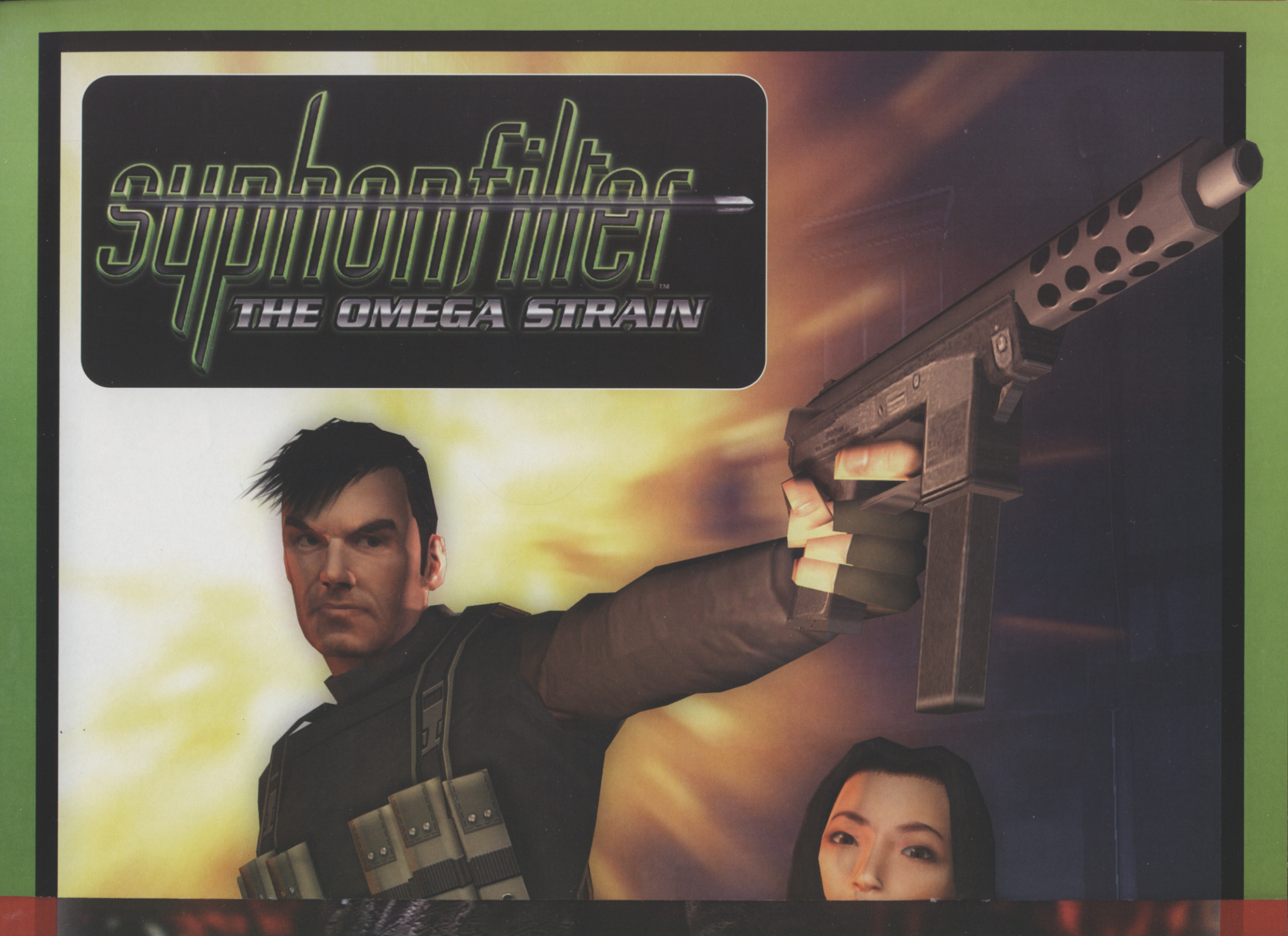
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THE OMEGA STRAIN

computer and video
games
DRIVER 3

# TEXT TO WIN

TEXT YOUR ANSWERS TO **84004** (T-MOBILE USERS TEXT 85140)

How to enter: first type 'CVG JAN COMP' then type out the letter that corresponds to the correct answer. For example: **'CVG JAN COMP A'*** *CALLS COST NO MORE THAN 50P*

# BADA BING!

## BE A GANGSTER! WIN A WIDESCREEN TV, XBOX AND A COPY OF MAFIA! (SHELL SUIT, SIGNET RINGS AND CIGARS NOT INCLUDED)

**AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE!**

**We'd all like to be in the Mafia, right? All those cool suits, slick hairstyles, fancy cars, gorgeous Italian food and the kind of strangely traditional family values that would put Ned Flanders to shame. If you forget about the brutal gang warfare, it sounds ace.**

But the word on the streets is that Take 2's new organised crime 'em up Mafia (out January 16 on PS2 and Xbox) will let you live out your Don Corleone fantasies without having to step into a pair of concrete boots. Even better, we had a word with the Godfather and he's agreed to give one lucky reader the chance to be a made man by winning an awesome widescreen TV, Xbox and copy of the game! On top of that, five runners-up will be promoted to capo and be rewarded with a copy of the game! All you have to do is find the horse's head (see left), capisce?

## FIND THE HORSE'S HEAD!

**QUESTION:** Every crime overlord knows the best way to scare the monkeys out of your enemies is to shove a decapitated horse's head in their bed. To be in with a chance of the haul, can you spot which screenshot has the unlucky bob-tailed nag's bonce hidden in it?

☐ TICK **A** IS THERE AN OFF-CUT FROM THE GLUE FACTORY NESTLING IN THIS LOVELY FORECOURT?

☐ TICK **B** OR IS THIS HOTEL LOBBY THE SCENE OF A HIGHLY GRUESOME HORSE DECAPITATION?

☐ TICK **C** MAYBE THIS RICHLY DECORATED LOBBY HOLDS A CLIP-CLOPPER'S NOGGIN SOMEWHERE?

# MAFIA

**WIN!** A 28-inch widescreen TV, an Xbox and a copy of Mafia. Five runners-up each get a copy of Mafia. Better than sleeping with the fishes!*

*TV model may be subject to change without prior notice depending on availability

CUT ALONG HERE

## GO ON, WIN IT

Fill in this coupon and send your entries to:

**Computer And Video Games**
**CCVG401A**
**Dennis Publishing**
**PO Box 154**
**Bradford**
**BD1 5RZ**

The nag's head is in... A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ (tick one)

Forename:

Surname:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime telephone number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

Year of birth:

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Please indicate clearly on your entry if you are a current subscriber.
Your details will be processed by Dennis Publishing Ltd (publishers of CVG magazine) and our suppliers in full accordance with UK data protection legislation. Dennis Publishing Ltd may contact you with information about our other products and services. Please indicate clearly if you prefer NOT to receive such information by post [ ] email [ ] phone [ ] mobile phone messaging [ ]. Dennis Publishing Ltd occasionally shares data, on a secure basis, with other reputable companies who wish to contact you with information about their products and services. Please indicate clearly if you prefer NOT to receive such information by post [ ] phone [ ]. Please indicate clearly if you DO wish to receive such information by email [ ] mobile phone messaging [ ].
Closing date: 14 January 2004

# GET THE MOST OUT OF THE GAMES YOU'VE GOT

# EXTENDED PLAY

**Get max mileage out of Max Payne and squeeze the best out of SSX. Our resident code monkey Barny Zoeller is here with more killer tips for cheating your way to gaming glory!**

## CRIMSON SKIES: HIGH ROAD TO REVENGE

Enter the following button codes during gameplay...

Y, A, X, B, Black

Y, X, B, Y, Black

B, X, A, B, Black

A, Y, A, Y, Black

X, B, X, B, Black

X, B, A, X, Black

## MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE

Create a shortcut to maxpayne2.exe. Right click, select Properties and change the target to "C:\Program Files\Rockstar Games\Max Payne 2\MaxPayne2.exe" -developerkeys. Start the game with this shortcut and press the ~ or ` key to bring down the console. Type in any of the following codes and press Enter.

| CODE | EFFECT |
|---|---|
| getallweapons | All weapons |
| clear | Clear console |
| mortal | Disable God mode |
| getgraphicsnovelpart1 | Unlock Story |
| getgraphicsnovelpart2 | Unlock Story |
| getgraphicsnovelpart3 | Unlock Story |
| gethealth | 100 Health |
| getpainkillers | Painkillers |
| getberetta | Beretta ammo and gun |
| getcoltcommando | Colt commando ammo and gun |
| getdeserteagle | Desert Eagle ammo and gun |
| getdragunov | Dragunov ammo and gun |
| getingram | Ingram ammo and gun |
| getkalashnikov | Kalashnikov ammo and gun |
| getmolotov | Molotovs |
| getmp5 | MP5 ammo and gun |
| getpumpshotgun | Shotgun shells and gun |
| getsawedshotgun | Sawn-off shotgun shells and gun |
| getsniper | Sniper ammo and gun |
| getstriker | Striker ammo and gun |
| god | God mode |
| coder | God mode and all weapons |
| showextendedfps | Show FPS |

## SSX 3

Here are codes to play as different characters, plus unlockables.

**BRODI**

Enter 'zenmaster' in the cheats section found in Options

**EDDIE**

Enter 'worm' in the cheats section found in Options

**LUTHER**

Enter 'bronco' in the cheats section found in Options

**UNLOCKABLES**

**Brodi skin**
Complete Peak 1 lodge

**Bunny skin**
Collect all the art

**Canhuck**
Complete Peak 3 Exploration goal

**Churchill**
Complete Peak 3 Freestyle

**Cudmore**
Complete Peak 3 earnings goal

**Eddie skin**
Complete Peak 2 lodge

**Far East myth**
Get 100 per cent in all mountain stats

**Gutless**
Achieve a medal in all events

**Hiro**
Get all the Trading Cards

**JP**
Complete Peak 1 lodge

**Jurgen**
Compete all Peak 1 goals

**Luther Skin**
Complete Peak 2 lodge

**Marisol**
Complete Peak 1 lodge

**Marty**
Complete Peak 2 lodge

**NW Legend**
Complete all Peak 3 goals

**Seeiah**
Complete Peak 2 lodge

**Snowballs**
Complete all Peak 2 goals

**Stretch**
Get all the posters

**Svelte Luther**
Get all the toys

## YOUR BEST TIPS

**If you've got a star quality tip that you want to share or if you'd like our resident expert Barny to answer a query, send it into us at:**

CVGTIPS@DENNIS.CO.UK

EXTENDED PLAY TIPS
COMPUTER AND VIDEOGAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
9 DALLINGTON STREET
LONDON EC1V 0BQ

## STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE

Enter the following in the Passcodes section:

**CHEATS**

**ACE MODE**
WHATTHE?

**EASY MODE**
WIMPIAM!

**CREDITS**
LOOKMOM!

**DOCUMENTARY**
THEDUDES

**MUSIC HALL**
HARKHARK

**ARCADE TOKENS**
FREEPLAY

**ARCADE GAME**
RTJPFC!G followed by TIMEWARP

**UNLOCKABLES**

**JEDI STARFIGHTER**
Get Silver medals in all single-player missions including bonus missions

**JEDI STARFIGHTER (MULTIPLAYER)**
Get all Gold medals in co-op

**MILLENNIUM FALCON**
Get Bronze medals in all single-player missions including bonus missions

**MILLENNIUM FALCON (MULTIPLAYER)**
Get all Bronze in co-op

**TIE ADVANCE X-1 (MULTIPLAYER)**
Get all Bronze medals in co-op mode

**NABOO STARFIGHTER**
Finish Tatooine Training in all four times of day and get all hidden items

**NABOO STARFIGHTER (MULTIPLAYER)**
Get all Silver Medals in co-op mode

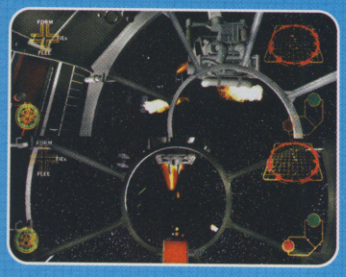
**SLAVE 1**
Get Bronze medals in all single-player missions

**SLAVE 1 (MULTIPLAYER)**
Get all Platinum Medals in co-op mode

**TIE BOMBER**
Destroy all ground turrets in Raid at Bakura in missile linked groups

**TIE HUNTER**
Get Gold medals in all single-player missions including bonus missions

**ACE MODE**
Get Gold in all single-player missions, bonus missions and Tatooine training at all four times of day
**AUDIO COMMENTARY**
Get Bronze medals in all single-player missions
**STAR WARS ARCADE, CREDITS AND DOCUMENTARY**
Finish Triumph Of The Rebellion single-player mission
**EMPIRE STRIKES BACK ARCADE GAME**
Finish all single-player campaign missions



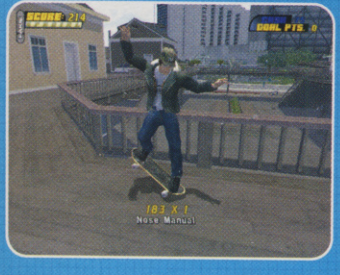
## CONFLICT DESERT STORM II: BACK TO BAGHDAD

**CHEAT MENU**
At the main menu press L1, L1, R1, R1, Square, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Circle. Go to Options and select Cheats.

## TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

Enter the following codes in the Cheat Codes option:

**MOON GRAVITY**
getitup
**MOON PHYSICS**
noforce
**PERFECT MANUALS**
keepitsteady
**PERFECT RAIL BALANCE**
letitslide
**ALL MOVIES**
digivid



## THE LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

Finish the game once to enable cheat mode. Start a new game and press Pause, hold down L1+L2+R1+R2 then tap in the following:
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR ARAGORN**
Up, Square, Triangle, X
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR FRODO**
Up, Triangle, Up, Down
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR GANDALF**
Circle, Triangle, Up, Down
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR GIMLI**
Circle, Circle Triangle, X
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR LEGOLAS**
X, Triangle, Up, X
**1000 EXPERIENCE FOR SAM**
Triangle, X, Down, X
**ALL UPGRADES**
Down, Up, Triangle, Square
**ALWAYS DEVASTATING**
Triangle, Down, Triangle, Up
**INFINITE MISSILES**
Square, Square, Up, Circle
**INVULNERABLE**
Square, Circle, Square, Down
**PERFECT MODE**
Circle, Up, Triangle, Down
**HEALTH**
Square, Square, Circle, Circle
**TARGET INDICATOR**
Up, Circle, Down, Square

## DINO CRISIS 3

**SONYA EXPRESS MODE**
Finish the game on either Normal or Hard difficulties
**WHEEL OF FORTUNE MODE**
Finish the game on Sonya Express mode

## SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4: SUPER MARIO BROS. 3

**MAGIC WHISTLE 1**
On level 1-3 get on the white block at the end of the course and hold Down. You will go behind the scenery. Now run to the end of the course to be transported to a secret room containing the Magic Whistle
**MAGIC WHISTLE 2**
In World 1 Fortress follow the course until you reach the first Dry Bones. Hit the Question Mark block nearby and get the leaf to turn into Racoon Mario. Knock out the Dry Bones then fly up to the ledge until you can walk along it. Walk to the right until you have to stop, then push up to get into a secret room containing a Magic Whistle
**MAGIC WHISTLE 3**
Collect the Hammer from the Hammer Brothers in World 2. Then go to the top-right corner of the world map and use the Hammer to break a rock leading to a secret passage. Go inside and beat the enemy to get the Magic Whistle.

## REALLY STUCK?

**Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope:**

THE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES TIPS HELPLINE
**0906 466 4659**

*Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantees to find you an answer within 24 hours.*
*Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.*


# BARNY'S PROBLEM CORNER

*Are all the hot girls avoiding you because you're just too crap at games? Allow love god Barny to sort out all your problems...*

## CONFLICT DESERT STORM II: BACK TO BAGHDAD

**Q.** Help! I'm hopelessly stuck on Mission Six where you start as a prisoner. You're on your own with no weapons or med-kits and you have to kill lots of guards – it's impossible. Please can you tell me what to do?
**Paul, Cardiff**

**A.** *There's a weapon on the table in the room you start in. It's only a pistol but it helps. Wait by the door for the guards to come in, and shoot both in the back of the head. Go through the broken wall and turn left. Wait by the first door with your pistol handy so you can shoot both men inside as soon as the door opens. Clear this room and get the sniper rifle in it. Stay put and kill any guards that appear behind you (use the sniper rifle not the pistol), then go out and shoot the light. When it's out kill the guard in the tower. The next room contains health packs and a team-mate.*

## RAINBOW SIX 3

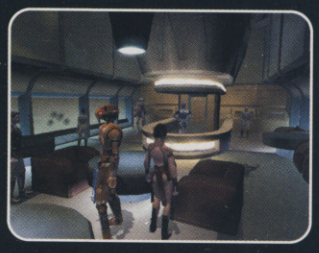
**Q.** How do you get past the shower room in the Alcatraz level. I always get killed or gassed.
**Anon, via email**

**A.** **Position your men against the far wall, next to the wall with two doors on. Run up the middle and shoot the man that appears above to the right, then quickly return to the corner where your men are. You will not be affected by the gas from here. Lob an M34 grenade onto the balcony above where the broken windows are. Now switch on your thermal goggles and scan the balcony above your men. Shoot anything that moves, then when it's clear move out so that you can look onto the balcony above the wall with two doors. Shoot any heat sources. When all the terrorists are dead, a few will burst from the doors nearby but your men should be able to take care of them.**

## STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

**Q.** I've already finished KOTOR once but I'm trying to go back through it and do all the side-quests and secret stuff. However, I can't finish the duelling ring mission on Taris. All the contestants are easy except for one called Marl who is impossible. How do you beat him?
**Dan James, Glasgow**

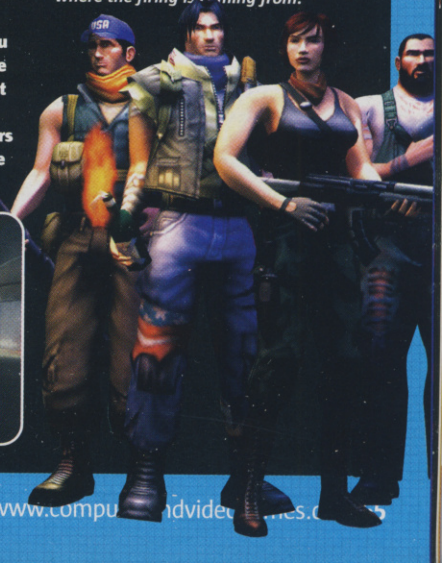
**A.** *It helps if you're at least level four before taking him on; being good with melee weapons is also a bonus. Make sure you are well stocked with med-kits and stimulants before you begin. At the start of the fight, take an Adrenalin stim and attack Marl. As soon as your Health gets halfway depleted, start running away. The Adrenalin should allow you to get clear so take some Heal and re-engage. Each time you fight you should do a little bit of damage to Marl. Repeat this process to win.*



## FREEDOM FIGHTERS

**Q.** Hello! I'm stuck at the start of the On Thin Ice level of Freedom Fighters on the GameCube. Any tips on how to beat it?
**Jim, via email**

**A.** *Make sure you collect all the equipment scattered on the ice at the start. When you go around the boat the guns on the towers will start shooting at your men first. Let the other freedom fighters be killed while you use the opportunity to jump across the ice to the left and take cover behind the large lump of debris. Duck out and grab the rocket launcher on the ice and use it to destroy the towers where the firing is coming from.*



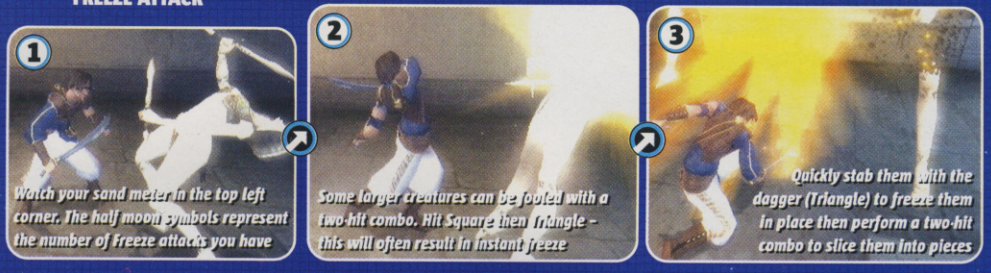
# PRINCE OF PERSIA THE SANDS OF TIME PLAYERS' GUIDE

**Barny Zoeller guides you through the wonders of the palace, beats the bosses and solves all the puzzles. Truly Barny is the 'prince' of our hearts...**

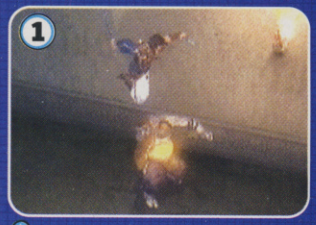
## 1 COMBAT EVOLVED

There are lots of neat little tricks to get you through the fights in Prince of Persia but usually the easy ones are the best. Remember to use X to roll around, this is the best way to avoid being surrounded and swatted like a fly. If you do get stuck in a corner hold down R1 to block and walk away.

### FREEZE ATTACK



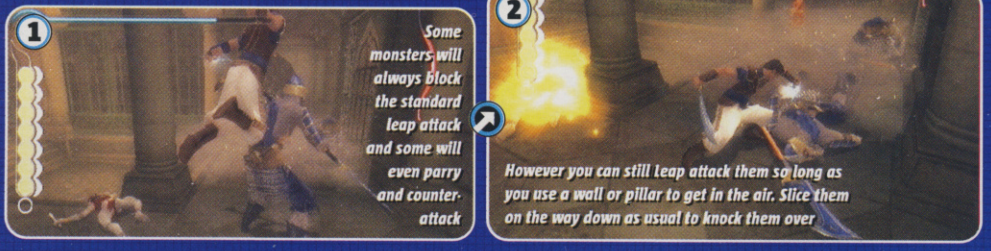

### LEAP ATTACK



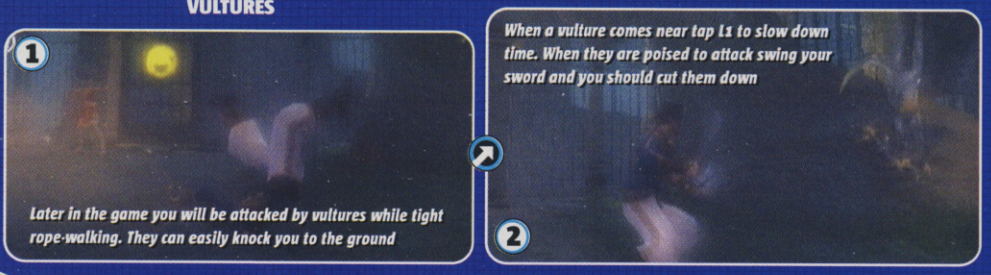

Choose an enemy then run up to them and press X. You will run up their body and leap into the air.

Quickly press Square to attack as you do this to slash at the monster while in mid-air. Then stab them with the dagger

### WALL ATTACKS




### VULTURES

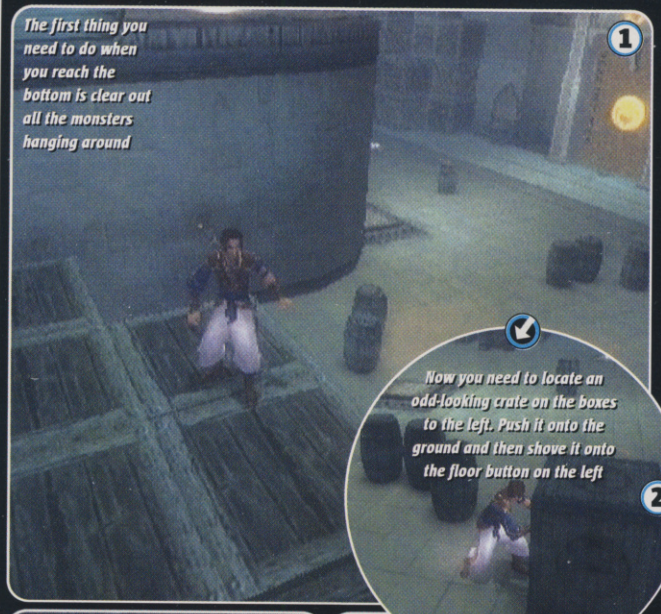


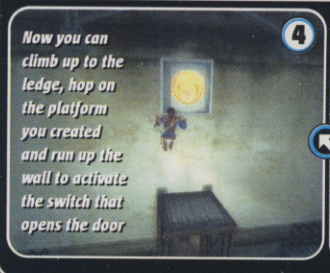

### REACTIVE DEFENCE SYSTEM

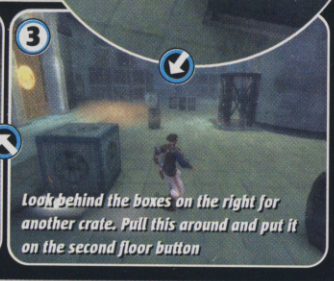
## 2 PUZZLES

Some of the puzzles in Prince Of Persia are brain-meltingly confusing. But don't worry, because here at CVG Towers we have teams of genetically engineered monkeys,m specially trained to work them out so you don't have to.

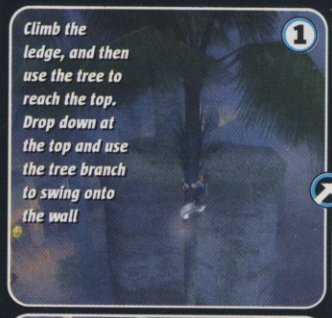
## THE WAREHOUSE

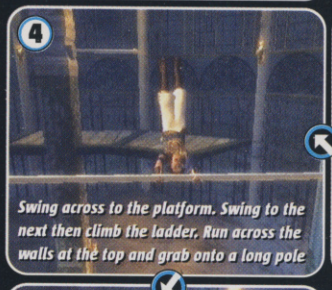


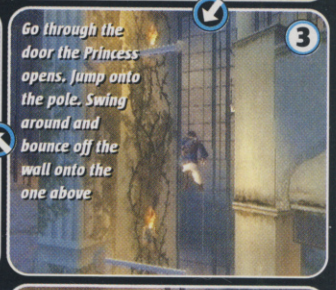



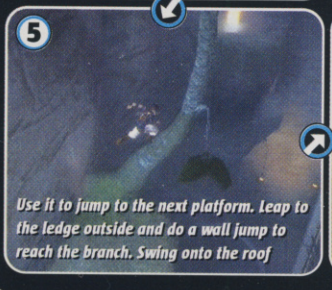



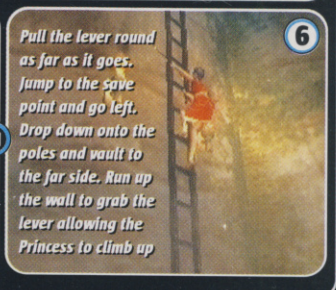

## THE SULTAN'S ZOO



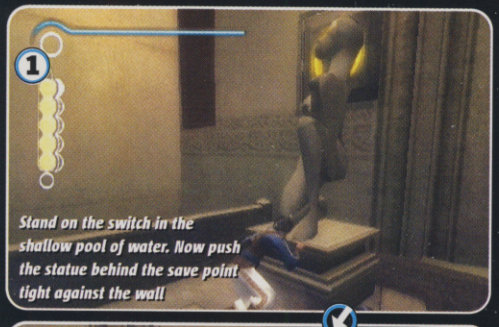


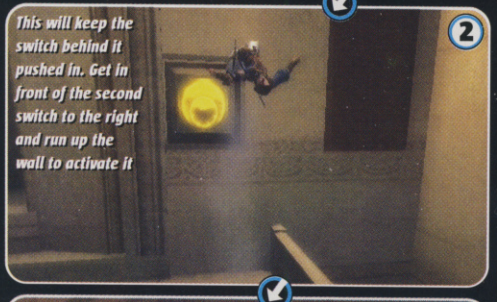



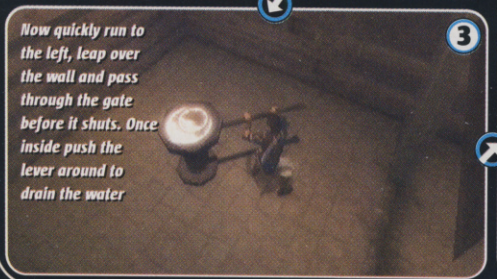



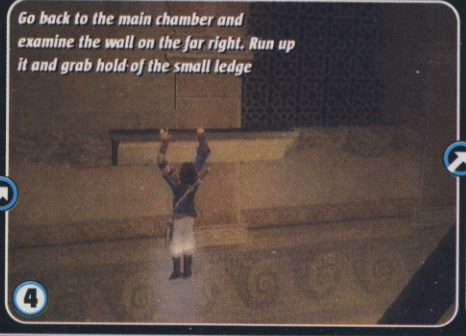



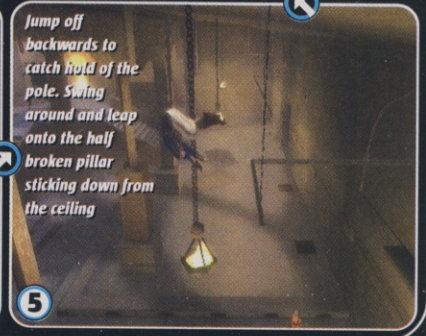

## THERE'S SOMETHING GLOWING UP THERE

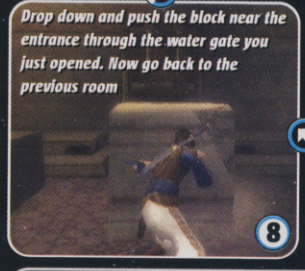


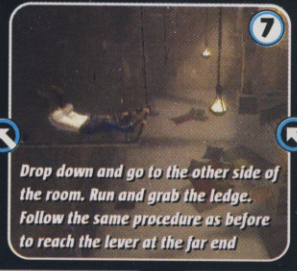



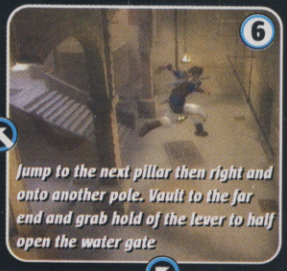



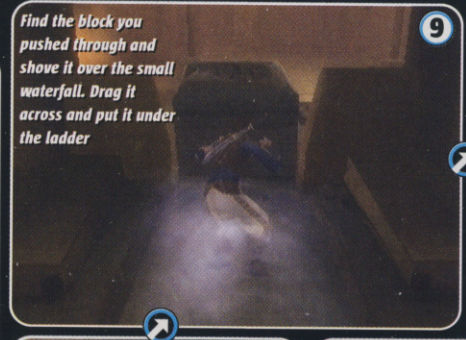



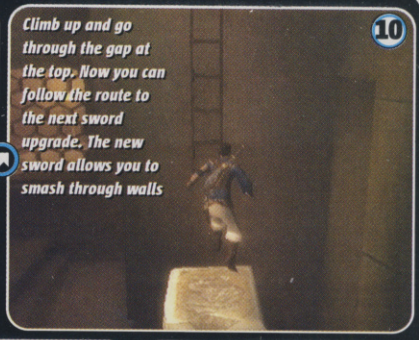



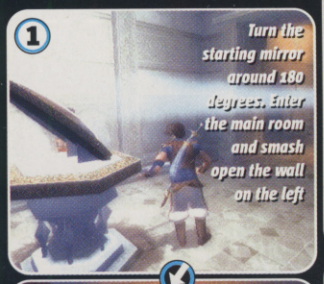



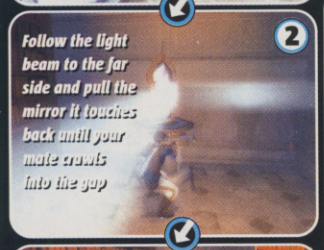



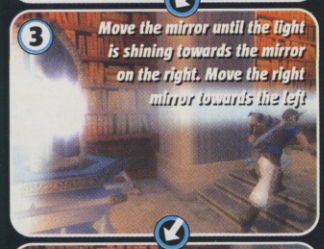



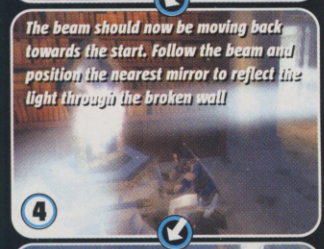



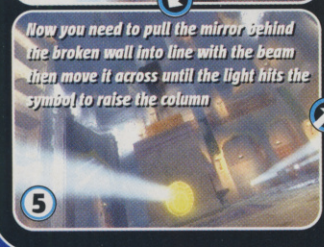
## HALL OF MIRRORS

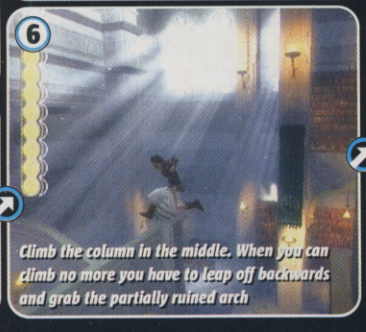

1. Turn the starting mirror around 180 degrees. Enter the main room and smash open the wall on the left

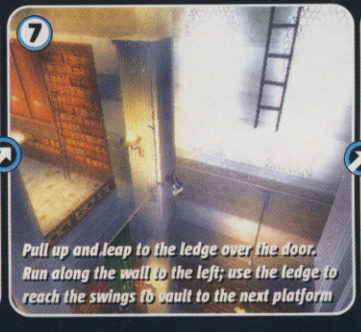

2. Follow the light beam to the far side and pull the mirror it touches back until your mate crawls into the gap

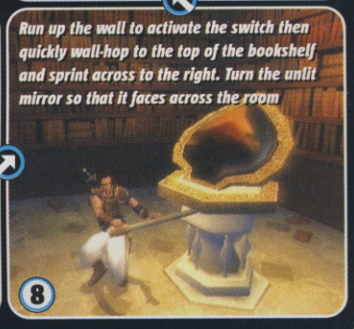

3. Move the mirror until the light is shining towards the mirror on the right. Move the right mirror towards the left

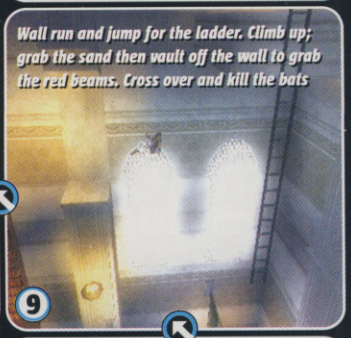

4. The beam should now be moving back towards the start. Follow the beam and position the nearest mirror to reflect the light through the broken wall

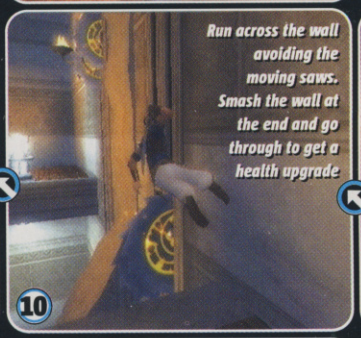

5. Now you need to pull the mirror behind the broken wall into line with the beam then move it across until the light hits the symbol to raise the column

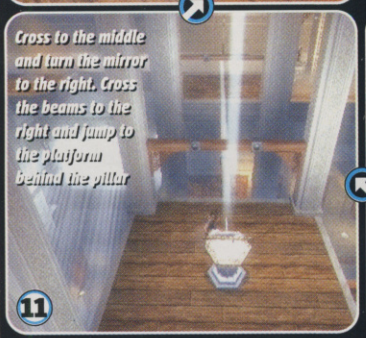

6. Climb the column in the middle. When you can climb no more you have to leap off backwards and grab the partially ruined arch

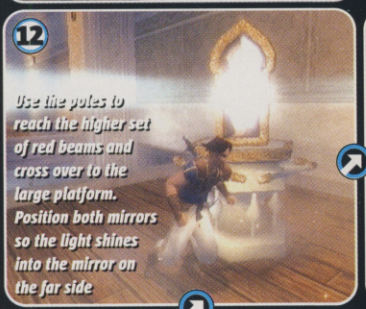

7. Pull up and leap to the ledge over the door. Run along the wall to the left; use the ledge to reach the swings to vault to the next platform

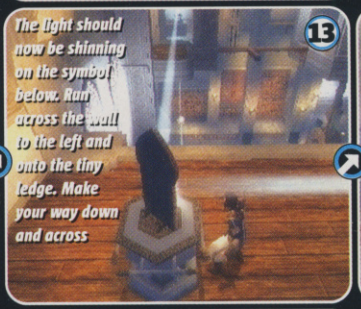

8. Run up the wall to activate the switch then quickly wall-hop to the top of the bookshelf and sprint across to the right. Turn the unlit mirror so that it faces across the room

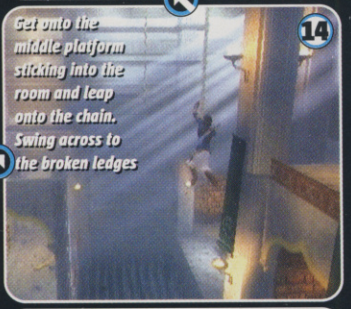

9. Wall run and jump for the ladder. Climb up; grab the sand then vault off the wall to grab the red beams. Cross over and kill the bats

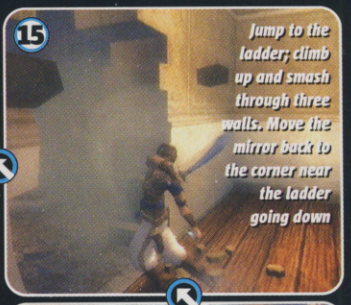

10. Run across the wall avoiding the moving saws. Smash the wall at the end and go through to get a health upgrade


11. Cross to the middle and turn the mirror to the right. Cross the beams to the right and jump to the platform behind the pillar

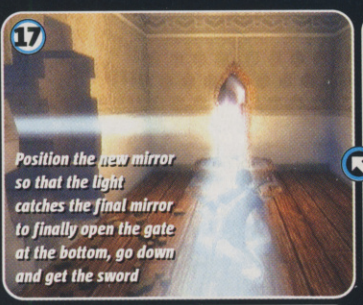

12. Use the poles to reach the higher set of red beams and cross over to the large platform. Position both mirrors so the light shines into the mirror on the far side


13. The light should now be shinning on the symbol below. Run across the wall to the left and onto the tiny ledge. Make your way down and across


14. Get onto the middle platform sticking into the room and leap onto the chain. Swing across to the broken ledges

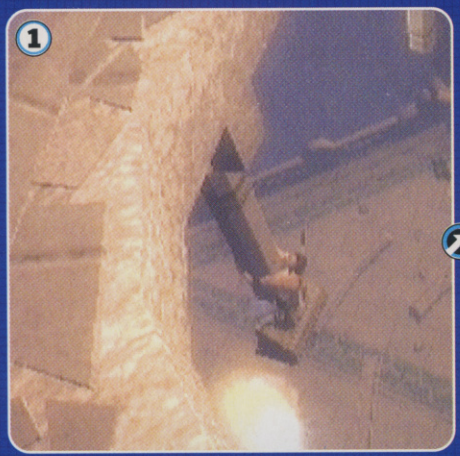

15. Jump to the ladder; climb up and smash through three walls. Move the mirror back to the corner near the ladder going down

16. Run across to the mirrors you moved earlier and shove the first one out of the way. Bring the second one over so that the beam catches the new mirror

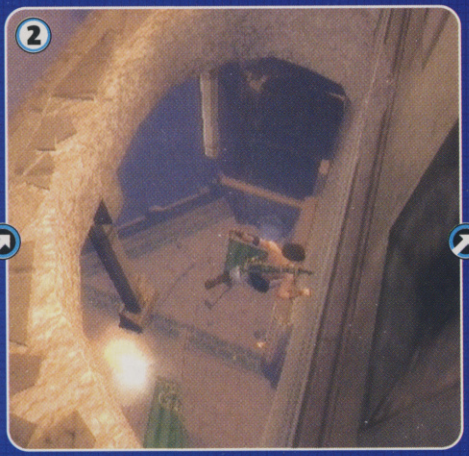

17. Position the new mirror so that the light catches the final mirror to finally open the gate at the bottom, go down and get the sword

## 3 THE MOST IMPORTANT TIP IN THE WORLD

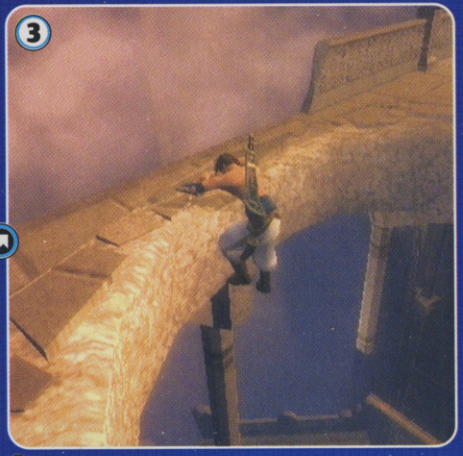
This game forces you to jump off walls all the time. They especially enjoy making you do it over high places where falling off means you die. As you move toward the wall you wish to jump off, every fibre in your being will scream to press X straight away. If you do this then you will fall and die (just wait to the end of the game). Do not trust your instincts because they are WRONG.


1

△ The correct way to do it is by pressing down X firmly at the exact moment your feet touch the wall

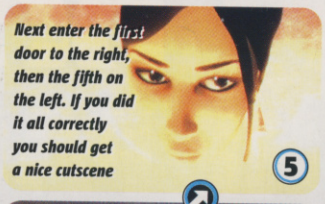

2

△ Remember, do not press X when instinct demands. Use your eyes instead and press X when your feet touch the wall, got it?


3

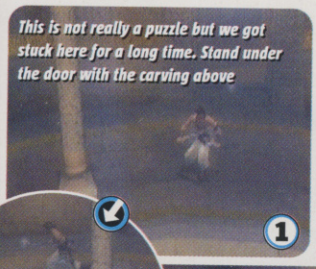
△ If that doesn't work for you try pressing X a micro-second later than you feel you want to. Many pads died to bring you this info

## 4 SANCTUARY



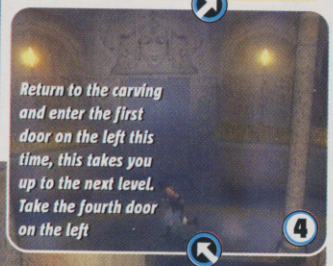
Next enter the first door to the right, then the fifth on the left. If you did it all correctly you should get a nice cutscene

5



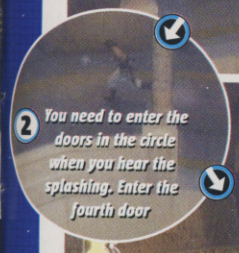
This is not really a puzzle but we got stuck here for a long time. Stand under the door with the carving above

1



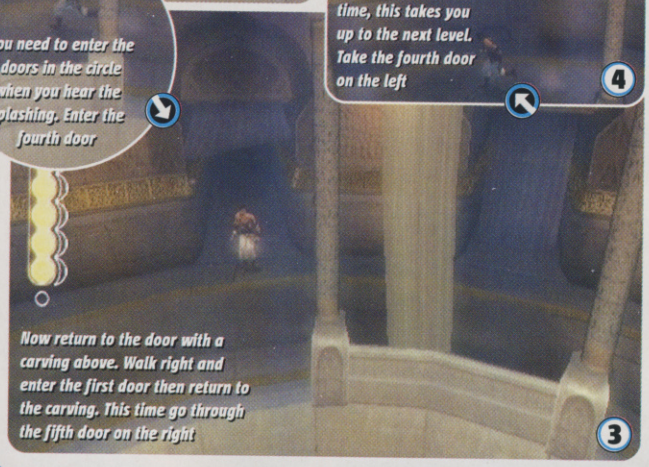
Return to the carving and enter the first door on the left this time, this takes you up to the next level. Take the fourth door on the left

4



You need to enter the doors in the circle when you hear the splashing. Enter the fourth door

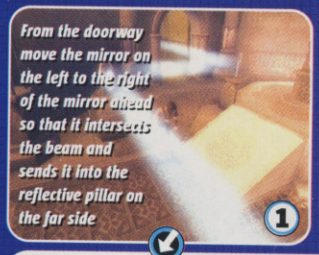
2



Now return to the door with a carving above. Walk right and enter the first door then return to the carving. This time go through the fifth door on the right

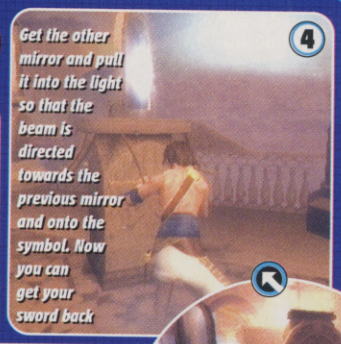
3

## 5 HALL OF MIRRORS 2



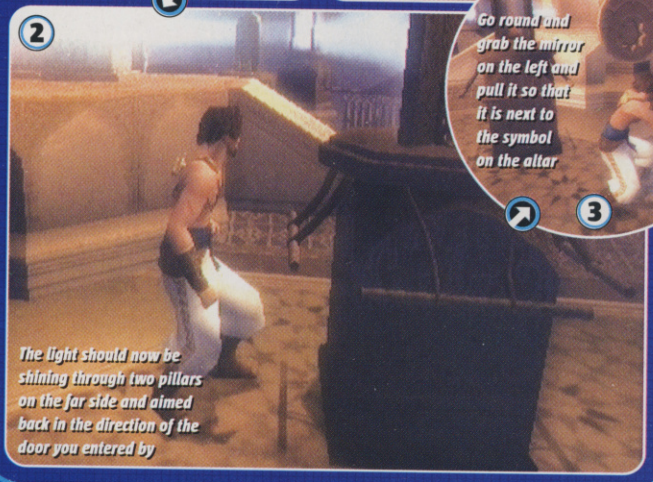
From the doorway move the mirror on the left to the right of the mirror ahead so that it intersects the beam and sends it into the reflective pillar on the far side

1



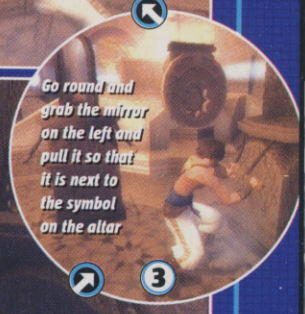
Get the other mirror and pull it into the light so that the beam is directed towards the previous mirror and onto the symbol. Now you can get your sword back

4



The light should now be shining through two pillars on the far side and aimed back in the direction of the door you entered by

2



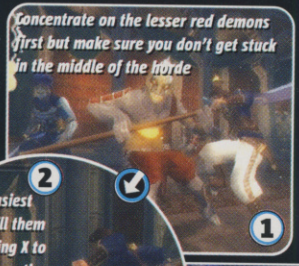
Go round and grab the mirror on the left and pull it so that it is next to the symbol on the altar

3

## 6 BOSSES

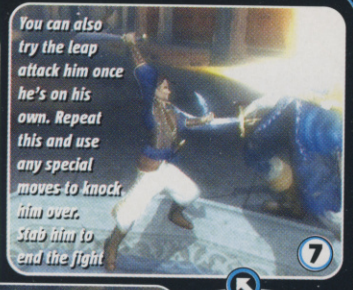
There are only two bosses and we beat them both up for you. Don't thank us, send us money instead.

### SAND KING



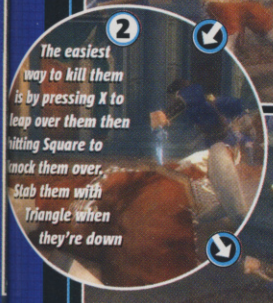
Concentrate on the lesser red demons first but make sure you don't get stuck in the middle of the horde

1



You can also try the leap attack him once he's on his own. Repeat this and use any special moves to knock him over. Stab him to end the fight

7



The easiest way to kill them is by pressing X to leap over them then hitting Square to knock them over. Stab them with Triangle when they're down

2

The blue demons will block your leap attack so stab at them with the dagger and attack normally with Square

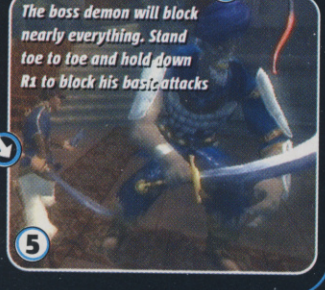
3

When you see his arm move back to strike very quickly press Square to get an attack in while he is vulnerable

6

This will either knock them over or freeze them. If they fall down stab them immediately then Freeze attack with Square to cut them in half

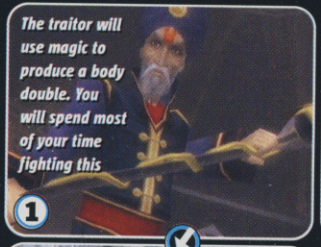
4



The boss demon will block nearly everything. Stand toe to toe and hold down R1 to block his basic attacks

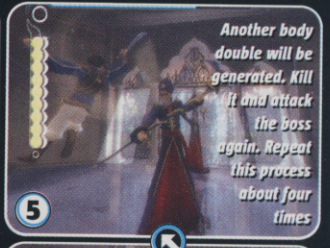
5

### THE TRAITOR



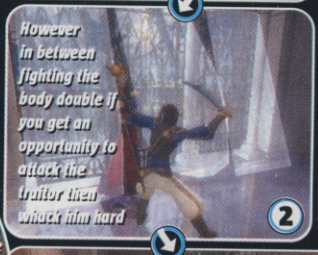
The traitor will use magic to produce a body double. You will spend most of your time fighting this

1



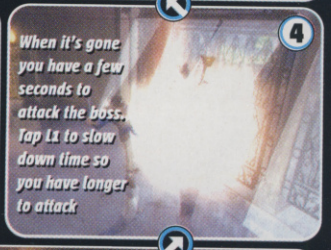
Another body double will be generated. Kill it and attack the boss again. Repeat this process about four times

5



However in between fighting the body double if you get an opportunity to attack the traitor then whack him hard

2



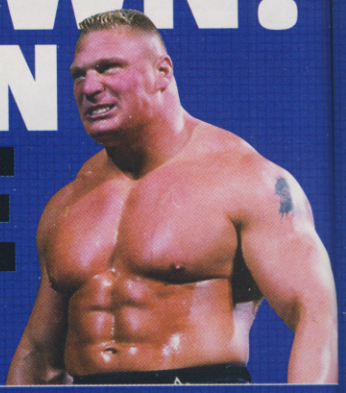
When it's gone you have a few seconds to attack the boss. Tap L1 to slow down time so you have longer to attack

4

The easiest way to beat the double is to do a standard leaping attack. Keep doing this until it disappears

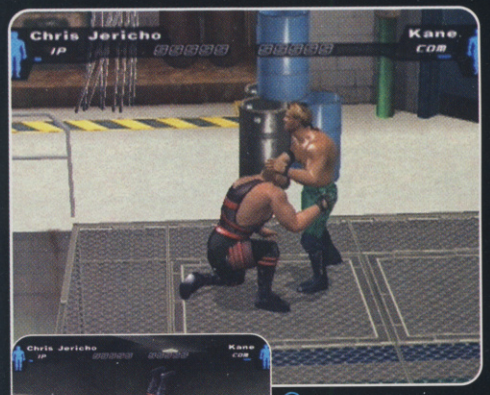
3

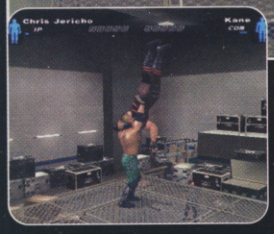
# WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN PLAYERS' GUIDE



**Alex Huhtala shows you how to get extra wrestling muscle without the use of steroids, razors, or gallons of baby oil and hair gel...**

## 1 BACKSTAGE AREAS



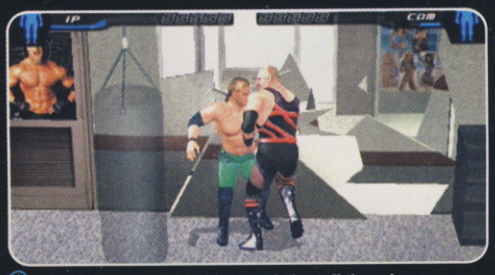



*The backstage areas are quite interactive, use them to your advantage*

*The cage works like a cell match. Do a big move on top of a hatch for big hurt*

Some of the coolest secrets and tricks in Here Comes The Pain happen in the backstage areas. Since most of the matches that kick off back there tend to be Hardcore fights, there's plenty of opportunity to play dirty and make the computer opponent look like a fool.

In the main backstage area that links the Parking Lot and Weight Room you'll get a tactical advantage in a fight if you're on the upper tier. It's easy to knock or Irish-Whip an opponent to the lower area causing them severe damage. Likewise, stand on top of the cage structure to the right of the area and wait for your opponent to climb up to reach you. Once they do, you have a number of choices. Simply give them a hard hit to knock them to the floor again, Irish-Whip them off the cage or perform a powerful bodyslam on top of one of the two hatches. The latter is risky as your wrestler may fall to the floor below, along with your opponent.

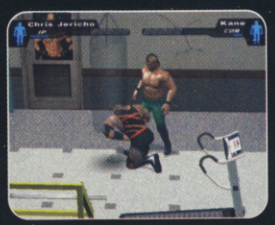



*It may take a couple of tries to crash the wall through*

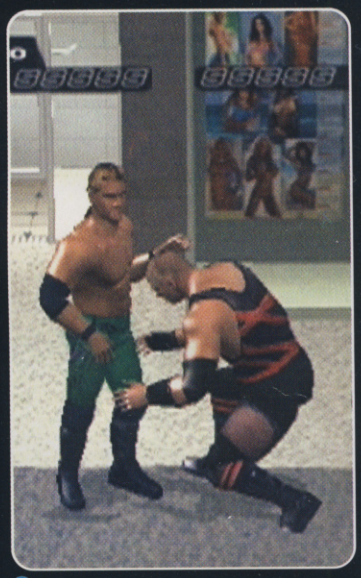
The Weight Room boasts a couple of secrets. Notice the crack in the wall next to the computer and monitor. Irish-Whip your opponent into this a couple of times and you'll smash through to a Shower Room. In this secret area throwing your opponent into one of the two lockers or showers will cause them extra damage.

Also in the weight room you can use the treadmill to boost your Special Moves bar. Walk onto one of the treadmills and press Square then repeatedly press X to start running on the machine. Once your bar is full press Square to climb off the machine.

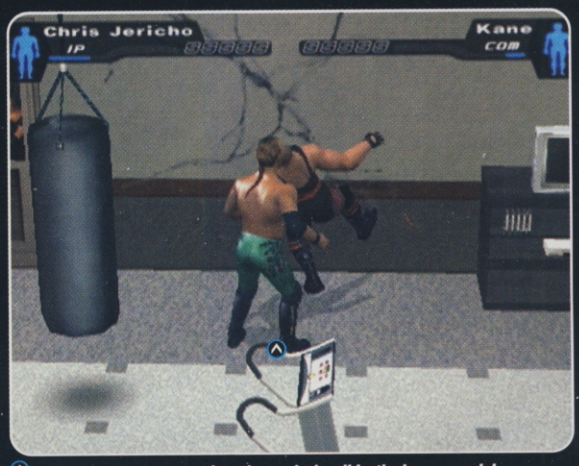
In the Parking Lot make use of the large truck on the right of the area and Irish-Whip your opponent into it. Strangely, your opponent will magically transport to the top of the truck. With no way of climbing down safely the only way to dismount is to jump off and cause him severe damage.



*There's a secret area behind the weight room*



*Once you do, you are treated to the ladies' shower room*




*Irish-Whip your opponent into the cracked wall by the heavy punch bag*

## 2 QUICK TIP!

*Having trouble getting your guy to admit defeat? Well, forcing an opponent to submit is easy when you know how...*

**FORCING A SUBMISSION**

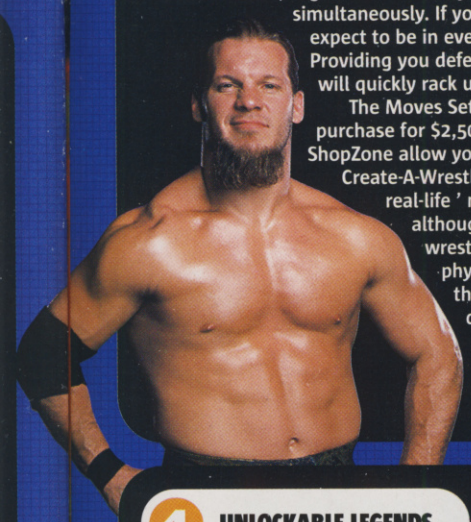
When you've got an opponent in a submission hold, the game tells you to hit any button repeatedly to force the submission. The single-button approach isn't very effective. We've found a much better way. Place your thumb diagonally between the four facia buttons of the pad, with the Square and X buttons on the left of your thumb and the Triangle and Circle on the right. Now continually rock your thumb so it hits both buttons on each side of the thumb repeatedly. Master this and you'll be forcing opponents to submit even when they've received minimal damage.

## 3 SECRET CHARACTERS

In Here Comes The Pain the secret characters you can unlock aren't kept very secret. To obtain them you must play through Season mode until you've earned enough dollars to buy them from the ShopZone.

There's no easy way of earning big dollars. The quickest way to do it is to pick a wrestler with their Original stats rather than a wrestler with Season stats. Winning titles and defending them at PPV shows earns you bonus dollars. Agreeing to appear at the British PPVs also gives you two extra appearances in the calendar. Make sure you visit your GM to make sure you're involved in a storyline and challenging for belts. You can hold as many belts as you want, depending on whether you're on the Raw or SmackDown! roster. On Raw for example you can hold the Hardcore, Intercontinental, Tag-Team and Heavyweight titles simultaneously. If you do achieve this expect to be in every bout at a PPV. Providing you defend your titles this will quickly rack up the dollars.

The Moves Sets that you can purchase for $2,500 each in ShopZone allow you to give Create-A-Wrestler characters real-life ' moves. So although the following wrestlers don't physically appear in the game, you can create them yourself by using their moves and designing an appearance.



### MOVES SET 1 (USA SET 1)

| | |
|---|---|
| 01-WWR | William Regal |
| 02-WAS | Al Snow |
| 03-WSD | Spike Dudley |
| 04-WBR | Bradshaw |
| 05-WFA | Farooq |
| 06-WBG | Billy Gunn |
| 07-WCP | Chuck Palumbo |
| 08-WBK | Billy Kidman |
| 09-WS2H | Scotty 2 Hotty |
| 10-WTA | Tazz |

### MOVES SET 2 (USA SET 2)

| | |
|---|---|
| 11-WHH | Bob Holly |
| 12-WJN | Jaimie Noble |
| 13-WRJ | Rosey/Jamal |
| 14-WTD | Tommy Dreamer |
| 15-WBD | Bill DeMott |
| 16-WFU | Sho Funaki |
| 26-WSM | Shane McMahon |
| 30-ODM | Dean Malenko |

### MOVES SET 3 (USA SET 3)

| | |
|---|---|
| 17-WCR | Crash Holly |
| 18-OJH | Jeff Hardy |
| 19-ORA | Raven |
| 20-OXP | X-Pac |
| 21-ODD | DDP |
| 22-ODL | D-Lo Brown |
| 23-OJC | Justin Credible |
| 24-OGF | Godfather |
| 25-OSB | Steve Blackman |
| 27-WBB | Big Bossman |
| 36-OER | Essa Rios |
| 37-ORD | Road Dogg |
| 39-CRR | Razor Ramon |

### MOVES SET 4 (USA SET 4)

| | |
|---|---|
| 31-OMP | Mr. Perfect Curt Henning |
| 32-OMF | Mick Foley |
| 33-CBH | Bret Hart |
| 34-ZAG | Andre the Giant |
| 35-ZBB | Bob Backlund |
| 38-DLTF | Terry Funk |
| 40-CST | Sting |
| 42-CJJ | Jeff Jarrett |
| 70-OHH | Hulk Hogan |
| 71-OUW | Ultimate Warrior |

### MOVES SET 5 (JAPAN SET 1)

| | |
|---|---|
| 28-NJPS | Perry Saturn |
| 41-LKS | Ken Shamrock |
| 44-WJKS | Kensuke Sasake |
| 46-NJMC | Masa Chono |
| 47-NJHT | Hiroyoshi Tenzan |
| 48-NJMN | Manabu Nakanishi |
| 49-NJYN | Yugi Nagata |
| 50-NJJL | Jyushin "Thunder" Lyger |
| 53-FRGT | Genichiro Tenryu |
| 54-WJVD | Big Van Vader |
| 58-PAI | Antonio Inoki |
| 59-ZONO | Naoya Ogawa |
| 60-ZOSH | Shinya Hashimoto |

### MOVES SET 6 (JAPAN SET 2)

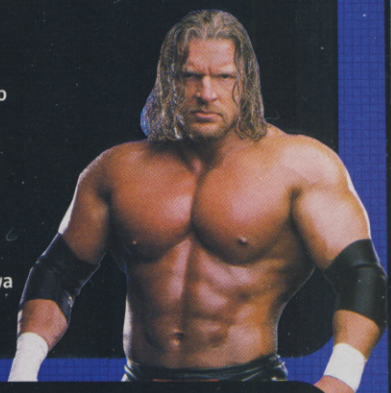
| | |
|---|---|
| 29-AJMA | Mike Awesome |
| 43-KTM | Taka Michinoku |
| 45-AJKM | Keiji Mutoh |
| 51-AJKK | Kendo Kashin |
| 52-AJTK | Toshiaki Kawada |
| 55-NOMM | Mitsuharu Misawa |
| 56-NOKK | Kenta Kobashi |
| 57-NOJA | Jun Akiyama |

| | |
|---|---|
| 61-MGS | The Great Sasuke |
| 62-JAO | Atsushi Onita |

### MOVES SET 7 (ETC. SET)

| | |
|---|---|
| 63-WIV | Ivory |
| 64-MS | Fred Durst |
| 65-PAT | Shoot Set 1 |
| 66-PGP | Shoot Set 2 |
| 67-JIDA | Joshi Set A |
| 68-JIDB | Joshi Set B |
| 69-MEX | Lucha Set |

*Unlock everything in the ShopZone, but first you need to earn the dollars*



## 4 UNLOCKABLE LEGENDS

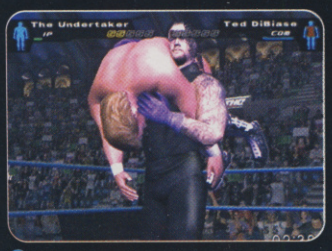
Here are the characters you can unlock by accumulating enough dollars in Season mode and purchasing them from the ShopZone. As you may not have seen them in action on TV before, we've included the situations for each of their Special moves.

*The old stars are back for some SmackDown! action*

### THE UNDERTAKER

**SPECIAL MOVES**

CHOKESLAM
Facing the groggy opponent




*Undertaker gets ready for a Tombstone*

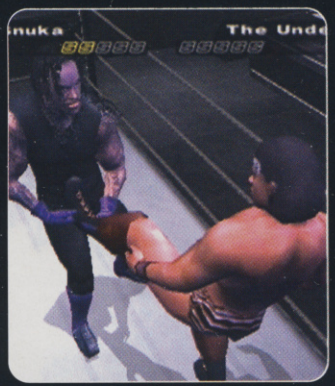
TOMBSTONE PILEDRIVER PIN
Facing the groggy opponent

### JIMMY 'SUPERFLY' SNUKA

**SPECIAL MOVES**

JIMMY SNUKA SPECIAL
While opponent is groggy against the ropes

SUPERFLY
While opponent is on the ground from the top turnbuckle



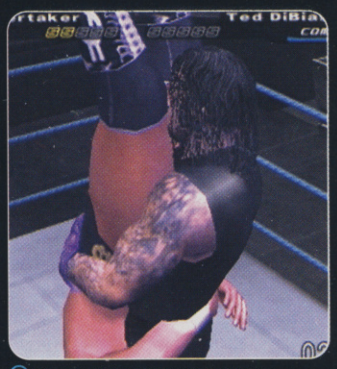

*Superfly was once the coolest wrestler in the WWE*

### TED 'MILLION DOLLAR MAN' DIBIASE

**SPECIAL MOVES**

MILLION $ FIST DROP
While opponent is on the ground: upper body

MILLION $ DREAM
Behind the groggy opponent




*Say goodnight Million Dollar Man*

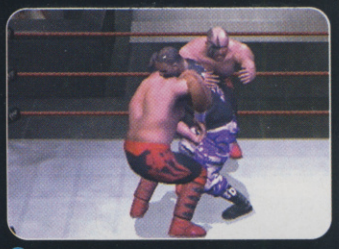
### HAWK

**SPECIAL MOVES**

FALLING NECKBREAKER
Facing the groggy opponent

FLYING CLOTHESLINE
On the top rope facing groggy opponent

*The good old days when make-up was menacing*



*Animal gives D-Von his special*

### ANIMAL

**SPECIAL MOVES**

OKLAHOMA SLAM
Facing the groggy opponent

POWERSLAM PIN
Facing the groggy opponent

### SGT. SLAUGHTER

**SPECIAL MOVES**

SGT COBRA CLUTCH
While opponent is on the ground: upper body

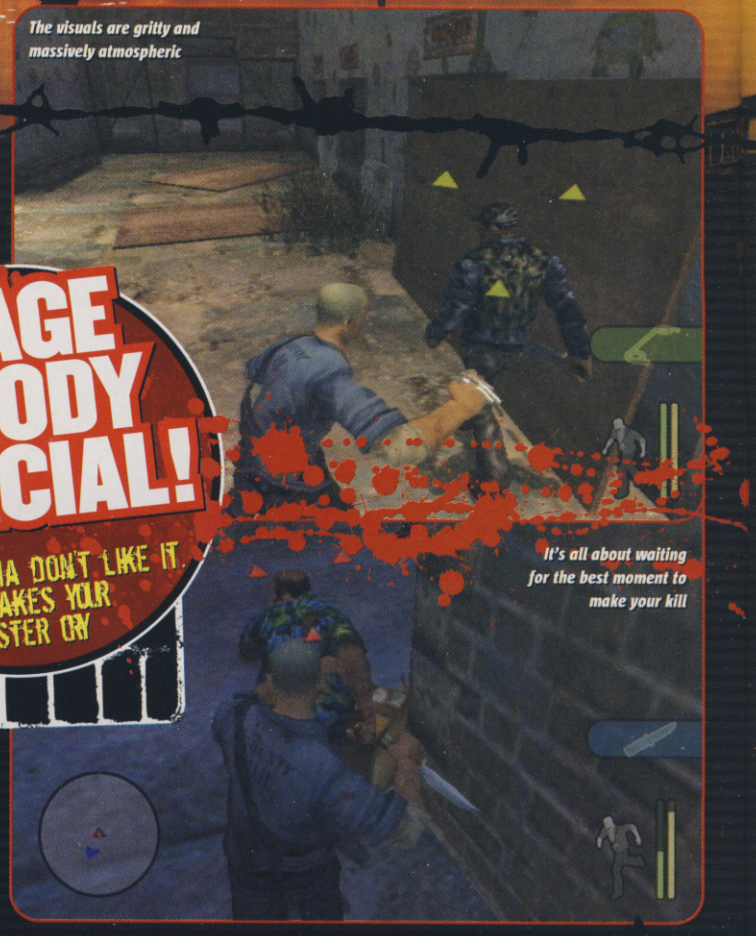
CAMEL CLUTCH
While opponent is on the ground: upper body

*Slaughter is a master of submission holds*

# MANHUNT

## 8-PAGE BLOODY SPECIAL!

YOUR MAMA DON'T LIKE IT IT MAKES YOUR SISTER CRY



The visuals are gritty and massively atmospheric

It's all about waiting for the best moment to make your kill

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: ROCKSTAR DEV: ROCKSTAR NORTH
WWW.VALIANT-ENT.COM
REVIEWED ON PS2

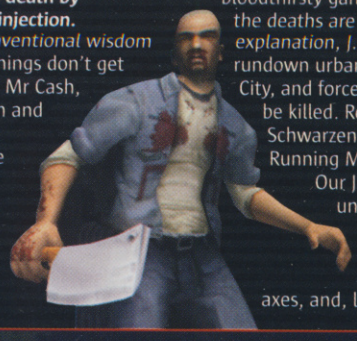
## VERY VIOLENT AND HYPED TO HELL. BUT IS IT ANY GOOD?

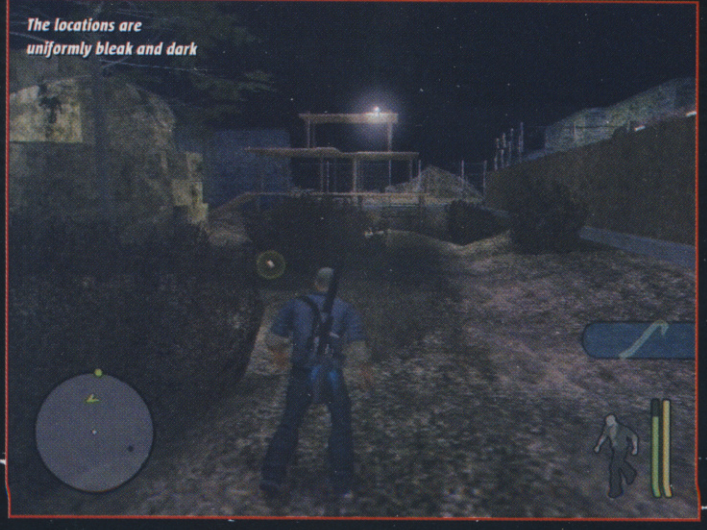
**James Earl Cash is a geezer condemned to death by lethal injection.**

*Conventional wisdom* would have it that things don't get much worse, but for Mr Cash, being strapped down and jabbed full of poison would arguably have been preferable to what's in store.

Because, instead, a psycho underground snuff movie director has saved him, and is now forcing him to star in a series of demented 'slasher' flicks where the extras are a bunch of bloodthirsty gang-bangers and all the deaths are real. With no explanation, J.E. is dumped in the rundown urban hellhole of Carcer City, and forced to kill or be killed. Remember Schwarzenegger in The Running Man? Child's play.

Our Jimmy finds himself unarmed, up against gangs of goons carrying knives, baseball bats, axes, and, later, guns of all



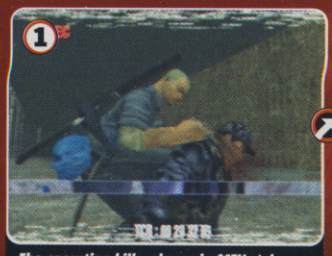


The locations are uniformly bleak and dark

## PUBLIC EXECUTIONS

**To get an execution kill, you have to sneak up on your prey. Then, the longer you hold circle before releasing for the attack determines how spectacular the slaughter is.**

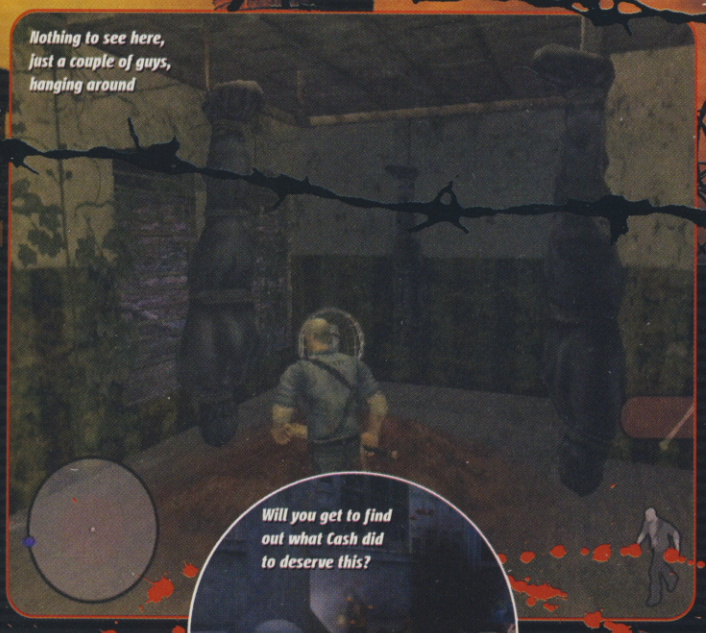
Holding on long enough for the best kills (and therefore more points from the director) calls for balls the size of babies' heads. But if you've got a sick mind (like us), then it's worth it.



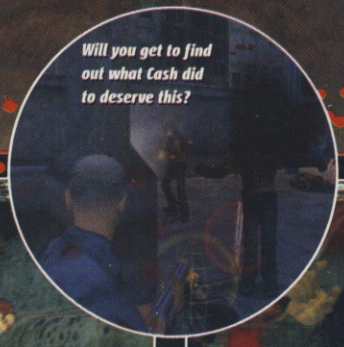

The execution kills, shown in CCTV-style replay are gruesome. Your gran would disown you if she saw you playing this

You'll never look at a Tesco carrier bag the same way again after this. That is just super-brutal. Hope it was recyclable

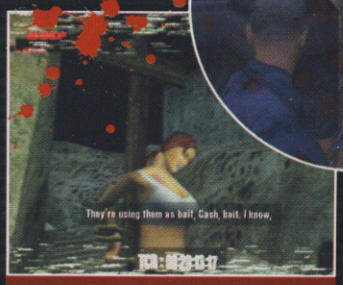
There's a nasty 'pop' when you bust open someone's head with the baseball bat



Nothing to see here, just a couple of guys, hanging around



Will you get to find out what Cash did to deserve this?




The director will set extra tasks, like saving these poor folks from being murdered

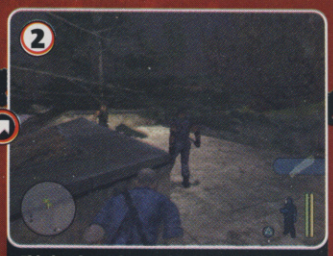
With scenes like these, Manhunt's not one for the lily-livered or weak at heart...

## GANG WARFARE

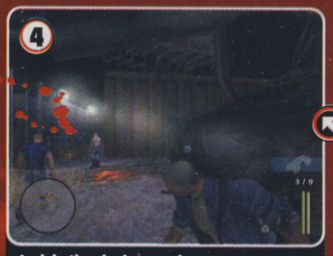
**You're not up against guards manning a sentrypost here. These so-called Hunters – gangs of drunk, drug-fiend sociopaths – know you're out there, and they will come looking for you.**

Sometimes you don't even know who's hunting who as you and the psychotic freaks stalk each other in mission after mission of lethal cat and mouse.

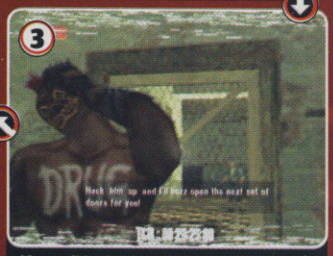
Each 'Scene' will have a different gang out to get you. Each gang packs different weapons and uses different methods



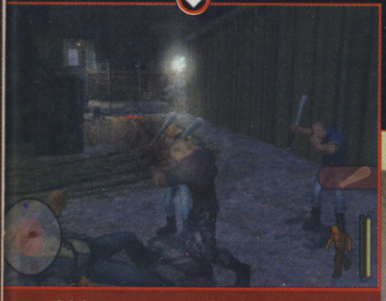
This is where the stealth element really comes in, and watching from the shadows as nattering goons look for you is cool



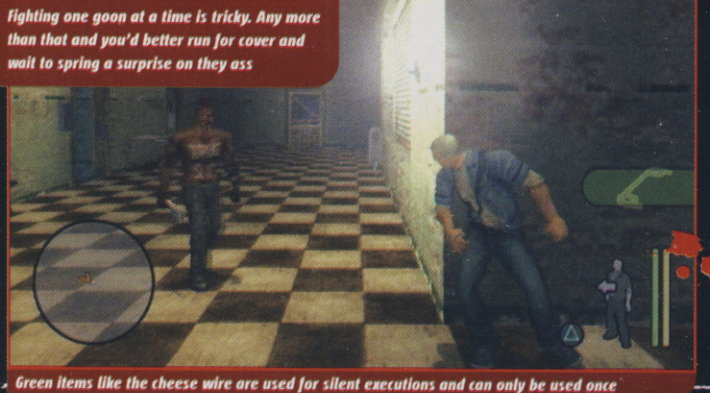
Lurk in the shadows as long as you want, but if the guards see or hear something, they'll come searching for you




These gibbering loons in the asylum are far gone. Best end it for them. The director will be pleased with you if you do it in style



Fighting one goon at a time is tricky. Any more than that and you'd better run for cover and wait to spring a surprise on they ass



Green items like the cheese wire are used for silent executions and can only be used once

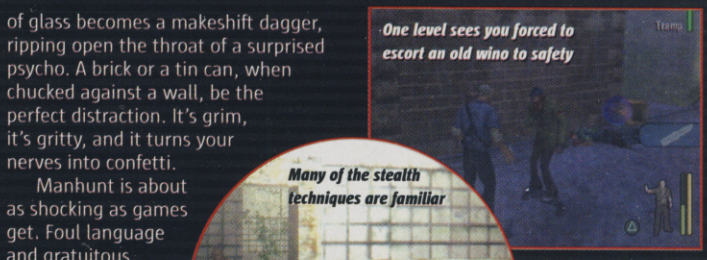
kinds, forced to complete tasks set by Starkweather, the director. It's pretty clear Jim's going to have to use every ounce of cunning and stealth he can muster to make sure it's not him who gets to be the snuff in the snuff movie.

### BAG 'EM, TAG 'EM

For the most part, Manhunt is a stealth 'em up, only set in the grim, lawless, decrepit inner city slums of Carcer City. It's Tenchu in a crack den, a snuff movie version of Metal Gear Solid.

From the off, Cash is forced to improvise. A polythene bag becomes a weapon as you viciously suffocate a loitering thug with it. A broken shard of glass becomes a makeshift dagger, ripping open the throat of a surprised psycho. A brick or a tin can, when chucked against a wall, be the perfect distraction. It's grim, it's gritty, and it turns your nerves into confetti.

Manhunt is about as shocking as games get. Foul language and gratuitous violence abound. Every time our hero makes a stealth kill, the view cuts to a grainy, CCTV-style replay of the event, showing what the depraved viewers of this obscene filth are getting off on. Brains bashed clean out with a baseball bat. Spinal columns severed with the strike of a hatchet. Heads lopped off with one, two, three biting hacks of a machete. The better you line up your kill, the nastier the replay, and the higher your score at the end of the mission.




One level sees you forced to escort an old wino to safety

Many of the stealth techniques are familiar

### BRUTAL DELUXE

Despite its fearsome atmosphere and torrents of violence, Manhunt's no classic. In fact, strip away the gore and it's really quite an unremarkable game. Like all stealth 'em ups, many will find the pace too slow, and repeating the tough sections over and over gets on your tits. You'll be glad of the firepower when you get your hands on some guns, but when you do, the gameplay switches to a kind of sub-Max Payne third-person shooter. What's more, we've seen all the stealth stuff before. Throwing things or hitting walls to attract enemies, hiding bodies – we know all the tricks. So while Manhunt's unsavoury action will never fail to shock elderly relatives, it won't keep your attention forever.

### GAMES VERDICT

Manhunt is a brutal and occasionally thrilling game but it would hardly catch the eye if it weren't for all the OTT gore and swearing. Good, but by no means great. **Steve O**

- Hone your animalistic survival instincts
- An atmosphere as darkly realistic as any
- Brutal, in-yer-face violence

- Repeating tough sections
- The gun action is a little weak
- Lacks truly original gameplay

**7 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Metal Gear Solid 2 (PS2, GC, Xbox)

**ALREADY GOT THE GAME? YOU MIGHT BE NEEDING A LITTLE HELP THEN. TURN THE PAGE OR DIE SCREAMING**

**EVERY SCENE GUTTED LIKE AN OVER-FED PIG AT A PORK FANCIER'S PARTY**

TURN OVER NOW!

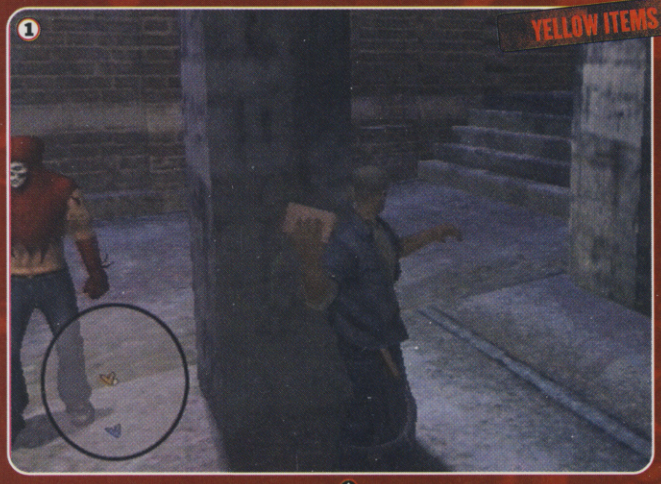
MANHUNT

# TORN APART

## CVG GETS INSIDE THE TWISTED WORLD OF MANHUNT TO BRING YOU THE ULTIMATE PLAYERS' GUIDE

## 1 TOOLS OF THE TRADE

From carrier bags to tranquilizer guns, from severed heads to sniper rifles, there is reams of gubbins to get your blood-stained mitts on in Manhunt. Here's a quick look at what they do.




*Yellow items you can throw to make a noise and attract, or distract, a Hunter. Severed heads, while cool, don't make as much noise as bricks, bottles and cans. But they will make your enemy go to that point, rather than just searching in the vicinity*

*This category covers your lighter weapons. Knife, pistol, crowbar. They are often better than the heavier (red) weapons. For example, at range, the pistol is far more effective than the shotgun*

*Red items are your more powerful weapons, such as the baseball bat, the shotgun and the sniper rifle. These are the most hardcore weapons, and you'll be relying on them plenty. Remember though, when you use one of these or light (blue) weapons for a stealth kill, they make noise and can alert nearby Hunters*

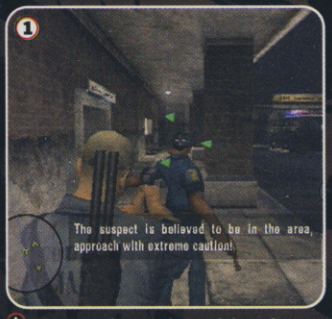
*These are the stealthman's treasures - one-use weapons that can be used for the completely silent execution. From the horrible suffocation of the plastic bag, to the improvised stabbing of the glass shard, use these when you need to make an execution when there are several Hunters in the vicinity so the others don't hear you. The only problem is you can only carry one green item at a time: save them for the right situation*

## 2 STREET FIGHTER

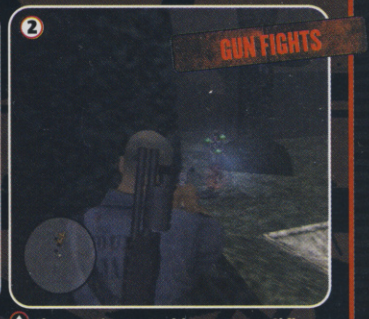
For the most part, Manhunt players stay out of sight. Stealth kills save ammo and fuss. But for all that, you can't avoid getting your hands dirty in various lowdown and dirty fights.

*Always lock on with L1 when fighting. You can usually get in a combo of three heavy blows before your opponent will strike back. So hold down R1 for run, and back off in between landing these triplicate blows. Use R2 and L2 to circle your foe during the fight as well. Also handy is the grapple. Hold X and Square simultaneously to grab your nearby enemy, then trounce him with a flurry of attacks. You can use this move when using a weapon, too. If your opponent does a grapple on you, smash X to break out*

The best way to kill with a gun is the same as with a hand-to-hand weapon: by sneaking up. When you get close to someone and hold down R1 to target, your cursor will lock on to their heads. This way, even with a pistol, it's one-shot, one-kill time.




*When enemies are alert and the radar goes red, they are ready to fire. If they see you they will get their first shot off early. If they are yellow, then they will be surprised when they see you, giving you a vital moment to shoot first. So even if you jump out in front of someone, as long as their arrow was yellow, you should be able to fire first*




*If you can't use stealth, use cover. Sidle up to a wall using triangle, then shuffle to the end. Tap the wall and try to get your enemies to approach. Then hit R1 and you'll aim round the corner for a quick headshot, if they're close enough. If they don't approach, let them shoot fruitlessly, and when you see them reloading, lean out and fill them full of lead*

*When you're moving through unfamiliar terrain, especially when indoors going from room to room, try always holding down R1 for aim as you advance. This way, using the right stick to steer, you can keep your weapon raised for when someone jumps out at you. The sight will automatically lock on to new targets without you having to let go and then press R1 again*

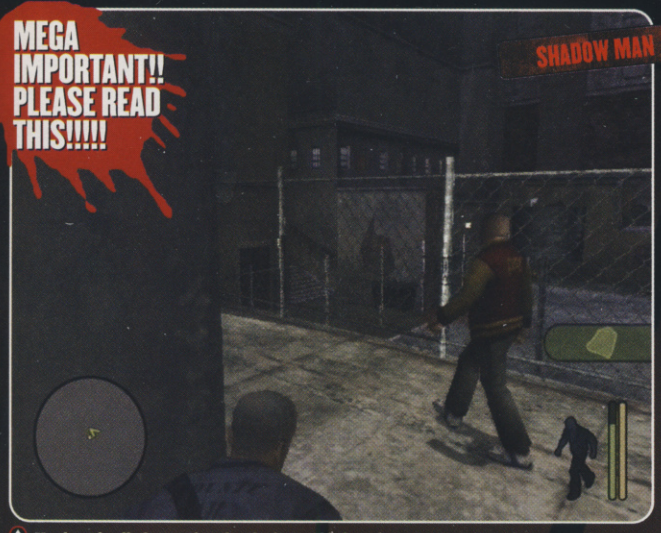
*When you see a fuel canister in a game involving shooting, you can practically guarantee it will blow up if you blast it. And Manhunt won't let you down in that sense. It's not all that often that this technique is useful, but sometimes it can be a lifesaver, especially when you've only got a pea shooter, so don't forget about it*

## 3 PUBLIC EXECUTIONS

Stealthy execution kills are the meat and potatoes of Manhunt, your staple diet. A quiet, unnoticed kill saves on all the messy stuff like getting shot, beaten to a pulp or having to turn-tale and flee like a great big girl.

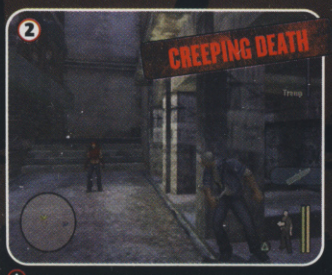
So you'd better get good at taking out those Hunters with execution kills, or it'll be a long and painful road between you and the end of level 20. Here are some pointers on improving your murderous technique.

**MEGA IMPORTANT!! PLEASE READ THIS!!!!!**



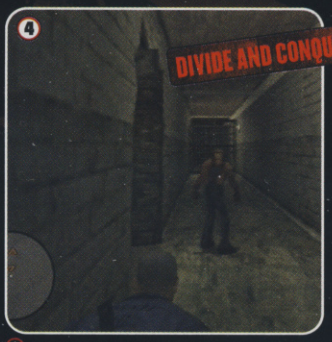

*Manhunt is all about using the shadows. This is so important, we're going to say that again: USE THE SHADOWS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE!! Hiding behind walls is fine, but you soon realise that you can be in a shadow (you can tell you're in because your shadow-figure bottom right goes dark) and no-one can see you, even if you're moving. They have to bump into you to notice you. So you'll end up committing 90% of your executions from shadowy positions*

*You've found yourself a cunning ambush point, perfect for springing out from so you can part an unwary Hunter from his life. Not much good unless you can persuade one to walk past, mind. So make some noise. Bang on a wall, kick some trash cans, chuck a brick or a can – even shout through a USB headset. They'll soon come running*

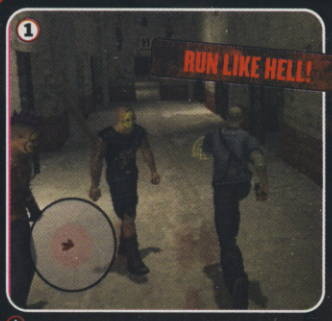



*When a Hunter is near, use the lean function (left and right on the D-pad, L2 and R2 when you're up against a wall) to keep an eye on their movements. Unless you are treading on gravel (a little red pulse on the radar shows the noise you are making) you can walk as fast as you want up to your prey, but never run. If you've got some distance to make up you can tap R1 occasionally for a little double step burst of speed without being heard*

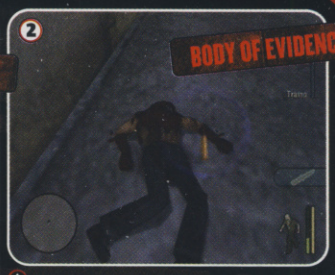
*Creeping up on a Hunter is easier if his arrow on the radar is yellow, showing he's not alerted. When it is red, your task is harder as he will be twitchy, looking around more and liable to sprint to where he hears a noise at a moment's notice. If his arrow is flashing deep red, he's seen you, so you can't hide unless you break the line of sight between you both first. It's therefore usually much better to wait till they calm down to yellow status after luring a guard with a wall-tap or thrown bottle before striking.*




*When there is more than one Hunter in the vicinity, finding the opportunity to take them out one at a time can be tricky. So your first task has got to be to split them up. A brick thrown here, a tap on the wall there – before you know it, you've got them strung out all over the place. Even showing your face can be a good manoeuvre at certain times, as long as you've got a good hidey-hole to peg it to*



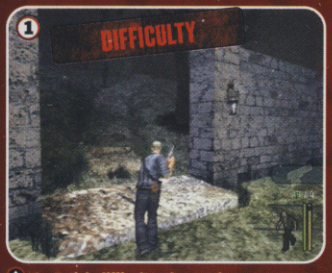

*When spotted, don't be afraid to run and hide, even if there are two or three thugs on to you. Sprint around a few corners, or through a few rooms, and then get in some shadows and stay still. This should be enough to shake off most pursuers. Then you can pick them off when they give up the chase and trudge off back to their positions*



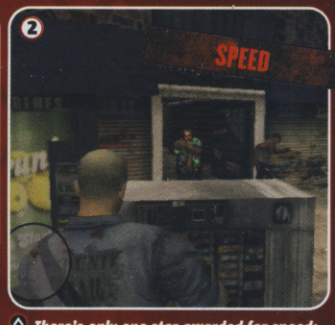

*Leaving the corpses of your battered foes lying round can be both good and bad. Other enemies will run over to investigate when they see one. If you are exposed, or in a bad position, that can be bad. But if you are well poised to slaughter them when they arrive, then why not leave those twitching bodies as bait? To move a body, simply walk over it and hold Triangle. You can only go slowly while carrying one, though*

## 4 UNLOCKING THE BONUS FEATURES

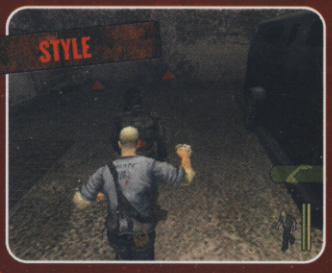
You are awarded a score out of five for each mission. Good scores here allow you to unlock bonus features which include new game modes and levels. There are three factors that determine your rating.




*On Fetish difficulty, the maximum score you can get is four, so for the top ratings you have to play hardcore. In Hardcore, you get no radar, so taking your time and using the lean function loads are vital*




*There's only one star awarded for speed: either you are fast enough or you aren't: it's that simple. To increase your speed through each level, try to learn the approximate locations of the enemies so you can run around them. Know where the save points are, as you can do each mission in stages*




*Style accounts for three of the five stars you can earn for each mission. Essentially, you want to kill as many enemies by stealth as possible. Getting yellow and red executions helps here. When using guns, killing with headshots does the job too – just hold your fire until you are as close as possible.*

MANHUNT

REC
SAVE

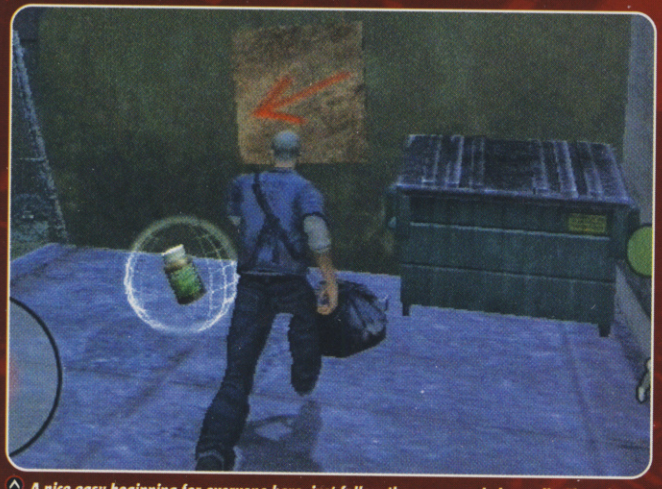
# EVERY SCENE GUTTED!

## WE SHOWED IT NO MERCY

What you've got here is not a walkthrough in the normal sense. It's almost impossible to get lost in Manhunt's levels as they practically signpost you where to go at every juncture. So we haven't bothered with wasting space on directions.

What's more, there are virtually no puzzles, so we haven't got a list of solutions. Instead, we've tried to pinpoint the hardest areas in the game and give you advice on how to deal with the legions of Hunters, cops and SWAT troopers you've got to face. For most levels, it's a case of listening to our tips on the previous pages and knocking off all the scumbags in your path. For others, it might be a little more tricky...

### 1 BORN AGAIN

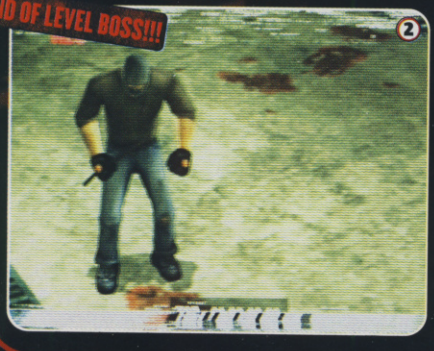


^ A nice easy beginning for everyone here, just follow the on-screen help, really. There is one guy you can't sneak up on – he jumps out at you and there's nothing you can do but run or fight. Never mind. Look out for the sign with the red arrow pointing you in the right direction – there are plenty of these dotted around the levels

### 2 DOORWAY INTO HELL

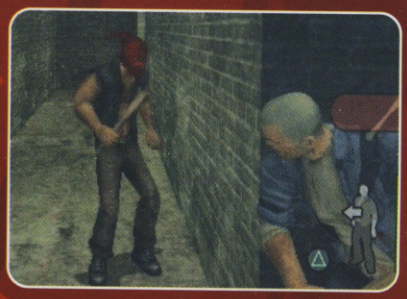
< Have fun executing the urinating Hunter. He's got a blackjack baseball bat. Enjoy. You'll get jumped by a screaming psycho at one point. This guy is carrying a crowbar. Make sure you get it off him as there's a gate with a padlock you need to break near the end of the level

END OF LEVEL BOSS!!!




< At the end of the level you reach a largish room. Trapped inside, you then have to fight hand-to-hand with a bellowing thug. This is where you have to get up to scratch with your pugilistic skills. But don't worry, this guy's not so hard, and there's a save point just before you enter. Take the chance to learn the grapple move (X and Square). See earlier for more tips on hand-to-hand combat

### 3 ROAD TO RUN

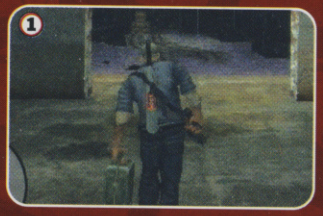


< You'll get jumped by crazies a couple of times in this level – without having the chance to sneak up on them. Fight them or run, find some shadows, then stalk and kill them. Otherwise, this level is a stealth masterclass – plenty of Hunters, and plenty of room with shadowy corners to stalk them in. You'll bleed your knuckles raw tapping them on walls to lure your next victim.

### 4 WHITE TRASH

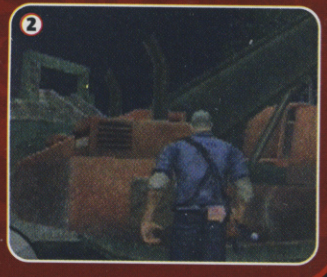
< Until you get the nail-gun, it's all about stealth here. To get the nail-gun, chuck a brick through the trailer window to lure the crapping Nazi. Inside is the gun, although you'll be jumped by two goons straight after. The nail-gun is only any good at short range, and takes three shots per kill, even with headshots. Look for barrels to explode round multiple enemies

### 5 FUELLED BY HATE




< This level is notable for its cranes. No, not the rare migratory waterbird, but the hydraulic heavy-lifting machine variety. You will have to refuel one in order to progress. The fuel can shows as a green blob on the radar, so it's easy enough to locate. Once you've refueled the first crane, steer it to pick up the fridge blocking the gap in the wall

> It's not often you get the chance to use a refrigerator as an offensive weapon, but here you do. By dropping it on the four guys who come running, you can kill them easy. The crane's cab gives good protection, so their shooting shouldn't be too painful. Later, there is another crane. While the fridge-kill tactic can be useful again here, there are more goons to contend with second time, and you might find it easier to get under the stairs for protection and fight it out with your nail gun




### 6 GROUNDS FOR ASSAULT

^ Once you're in the zoo, there's you and about seven Hunters. There are shadows to use, and with the machete, you'll never be short of severed heads to entice your prey. Chances are you'll have to do a bit of running if you're spotted. Run round a few corners then duck into some shadows. The key you need is in the bear enclosure, roughly the opposite end to where you entered

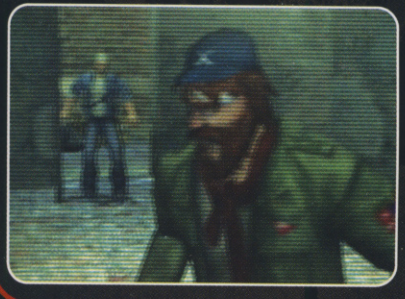
## 7 STRAPPED FOR CASH

This time round you've got members of your family to think of – they're hostages and if you get spotted, they get wasted! Actually, this doesn't make things too much harder as you only need to make sure one of the four survive to progress. Use the tranquiliser gun when you need to (two hits will have anyone out for the count) and don't forget to finish off any Hunters you put to sleep as they wake up pretty pissed off. There's a switch in a nearby room to open the door at the end

## 8 VIEW OF INNOCENCE

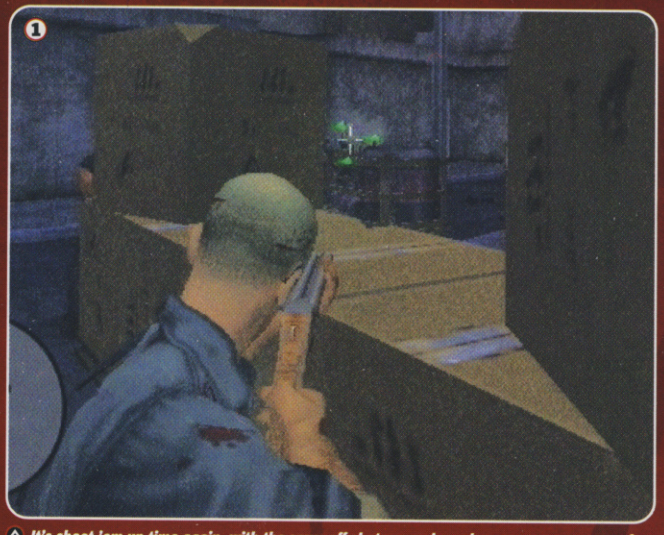
From the start, use the brick to smash the window in the shop to get the revolver. Then it's a case of using the fine gunplay methods shown in the first couple of pages here. The videotape you have to find is on the top floor, the camera is in a shop in the floor below that opens only after you've collected the tape. Then it's to the red-fronted bar to watch it on TV

## 9 DRUNK DRIVING



The twist in this level is that you've got a washed-up wino to take care of. For each bit of unexplored territory, just order him to stay put with Triangle. After the first stage point, things get tricky, with a lot of Hunters to deal with. In the street there's a crowd of them. Use our techniques outlined earlier to split them up, then take 'em one at a time

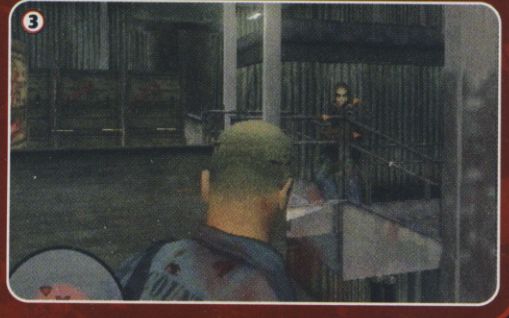
## 10 GRAVEYARD SHIFT



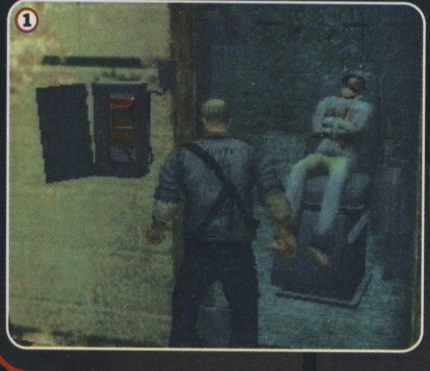

It's shoot 'em up time again, with the sawn-off shotgun and revolver as your weapons of choice. Don't use the sawn-off at anything other than close range as it's useless. The revolver will do the damage at range (around three hits for a kill) but will kill with one hit at close quarters. Use the barrels liberally scattered around to your advantage

The fight in the factory is a tricky one. Straight after the save point, get your revolver out and take the onrushing Hunters down one by one as they pile round the corner. Inside, pick off as many as you can in the basement by firing down through the apertures. Then go down to finish them off and restore power

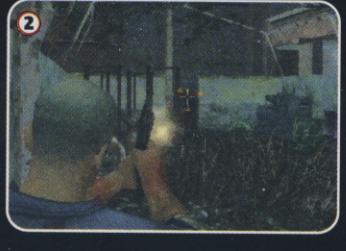
Then it's up the lift and to a fight on the walkways. It ain't pretty, and you have to pick your spot to fight from with care. Because of the long ranges involved, you'll want to use your revolver as much as possible




## 11 MOUTH OF MADNESS

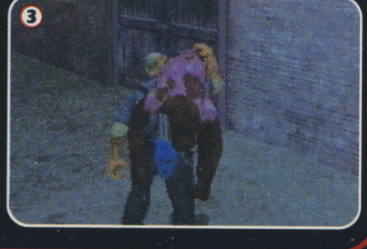



Push the switch that electrocutes the prisoner to lure down the gibbering guard. Sort him out and then outside you need to take out the three guys in the courtyard. The guy on the balcony has a revolver, but it's hard to get to him without him blowing you away. So let him see you to draw him down. Then, when he goes yellow and returns to his post, either execute him or ignore him and go through the electronic door

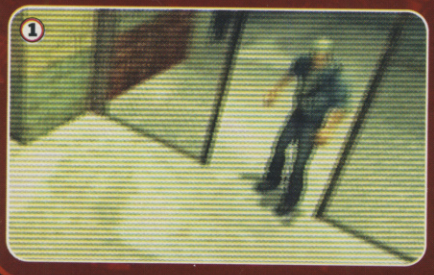



Inside the next building is a big firefight. Stay outside and try poking though the door to take them one at a time with headshots. You can get an automatic pistol off one of these guys. Fight your way up the building until you reach the roof. Kill the guy wearing a dress and carry his body over through the nearby doors with the words 'Guard Room' written above them

Stalk a Hunter for his pistol, then kill the others with headshots. Kill all of them in the vicinity before picking up the jerry can in the corner of the second walled area. Lug the jerry can to the bricked up entrance to the tower. At the top, flick the switch to open the other door at the bottom where a nice save point awaits



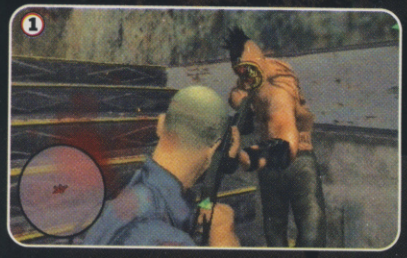
## 12 DOING TIME



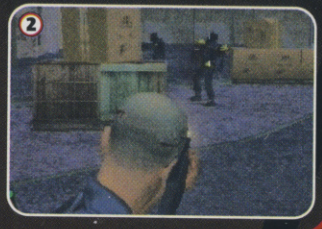
Patience is vital in this level as to progress you have to perform a serious of executions. As the enemy is not armed, don't worry too much about being spotted, although you'll want the Hunters on yellow alert to increase your chances of getting good kills. There are plenty of shadows, though this section is not so difficult

Next up is a mammoth shoot-out where you've got to traverse the gantries above the cell blocks. Making every shot count is vital here, as is using cover. Never fight unless you're behind cover, always pick up your enemies' ammo, and you should be all right. Use the cells for cover (there are painkillers to be found in here too), and try to entice the Hunters to you where possible

## 13 KILL THE RABBIT

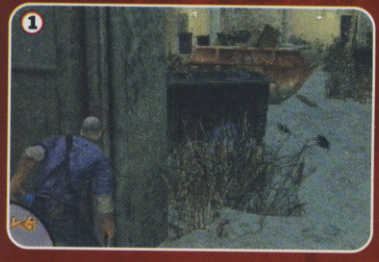


Lots of fun, this, lots of fun. You get a shotgun, lots of ammo, and a whole bunch of poorly armed hunters to blow into smithereens. First, kill everybody in the shower room and flick the switch to follow the rabbit suit guy. Time is not of the essence, so no need to rush. Slaughter everyone who gets in your way



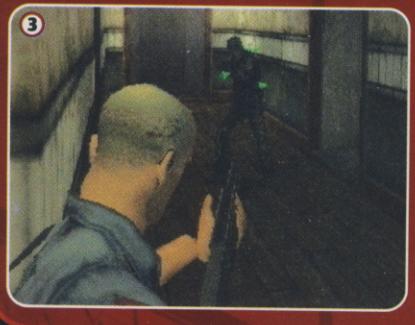
Once you get out of the cell block, you've started to turn the tables on your director – they don't expect you to make it this far. Kill the first wave of guards from behind the cover of the crates. Then get yourself up the tower and bag the sniper rifle and ammo. From up here, kill all the guards down below. Watch out for the odd one to try and come up to get you

## 14 DIVIDED THEY FALL



This is where things start getting tough. It's you up against Starkweather's elite Hunters. The first section is straightforward enough, however. Use your best stealth moves to polish off the guys stalking you, then head into the building where their commander is hiding. One of the best spots is just inside the shadow-filled foyer of the ruined building

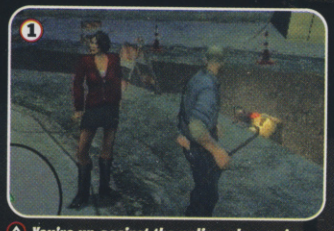
Once the first team is down, another lot, this time armed with shotguns appears. Take this lot down and gather your ammo for the assault ahead. Watch out for sniper fire, mind – try and keep in cover. Inside the building it's a trawl up the levels, being bounced by Hunters at every step. Keep aim (L1) down all the way to get your shots off first



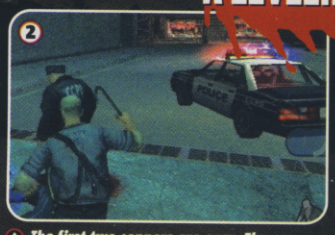
Once you hit the top, you've got to follow Ramirez down, against the clock. Thing is, getting down and killing him is all but impossible in this time limit, and we drove ourselves insane trying. SO DON'T BOTHER! All that missing the time limit means is that you have a few extra goons to waste at the end – big deal! So take it nice and slow, and you should be able to take down that SOB after a few tries

## 15 PRESS COVERAGE

**WARNING! BITCH OF A LEVEL!!!**

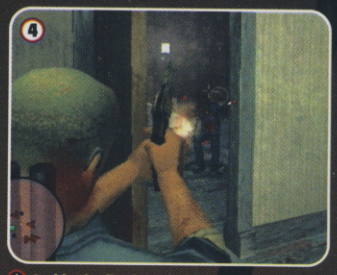


You're up against the police, plus you've got a press bint in tow. You can tell her to stay or follow just like you could the tramp a few missions ago. If you leave her alone for a while, though, she'll panic and run after you. Precisely what you don't want when surrounded by trigger-happy pigs

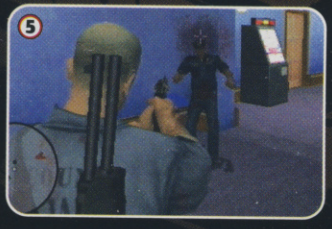


The first two coppers are easy. Throw a brick to get one of them to move away. Execute the one who remains, then when the other has returned and stopped being on red alert, take him too

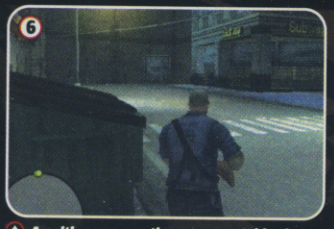
Approach the next group from the shadows by the pillar on the corner. Tap the wall to bring them over one by one. Get a pistol off the first one, and use that on the others. For the last couple, peg it over to the cars and use them as cover



Inside the flat is a shed-load of filth. The shotgun can be good here, but if you're careful and use the 'wall peek', you'll be fine. Next, deal with the two cops outside and run between the trucks and the wall into the casino to avoid the sniper



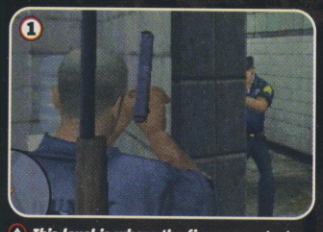
Inside the casino, tap the wall to lure the cops up the corridor. When no more come, go up the stairs and jump the sniper on the balcony. Grab his rifle and take out the oncoming rozzers with headshots. Make every one count so you can use the last couple of rounds later. Three cops will come in the casino and try to rush you. Catch them on a corner



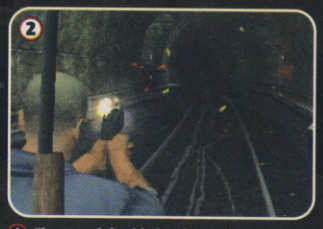
Awaiting you are three cops outside the subway and a sniper on the roof. The best way is with the sniper rifle. But only if you saved ammo at the casino. You can do this by only using the rifle to kill the two behind the far police car, and using the pistol for the others. There are painkillers down an alley on the left

If you haven't got sniper ammo, keep to the opposite side of the road to the subway so the sniper can't get a shot. Try running up to where the sniper is before taking on the guards outside the tube entrance. This way you can bounce the sniper and nick his gun to nail the other dick-weed lawmen

## 16 WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS

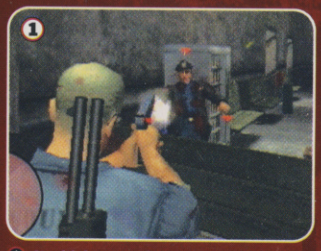


This level is where the firepower starts getting seriously impressive. We're talking Uzis and shotguns with nifty lights on. So it's about getting your shots in early using the tactics we discussed earlier. From the main room, go through the door nearest the train, turn right and shoot the lock off the iron door

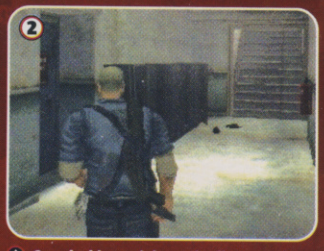


The crunch in this level comes after the first save point. Waste the SWAT members and take the left fork to get here. When you go through the door and fire, guys are going to come from all directions. So stay just the other side of the door so you don't get caught in a crossfire. Watch the radar carefully

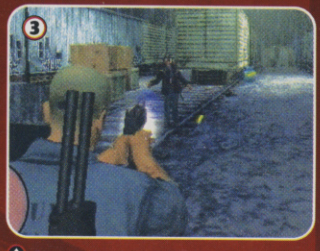
## 17 TRAINED TO KILL



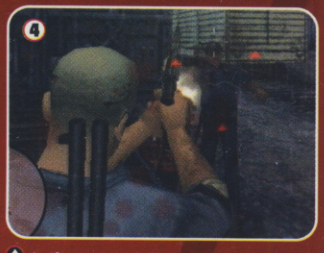
Stealth becomes important again in this level, as there are plenty of bad guys, and not much firepower. So when you have to fight, always make the enemy come to you, one by one, so you can bag them each with a single shot at close range. There is gubbins in the back of the SWAT wagons. But if you can work out how to get in them, you're better men than us...



Once inside, and down the first set of stairs, turn left and you'll find a baseball bat you can swap for your shotgun. We recommend you take it if you want to use stealth kills in the next section. Also, near here is some Uzi ammo. If you haven't got an Uzi, you can get one a little later on off a SWAT guy. Do this and backtrack to collect the ammo. You are going to need it

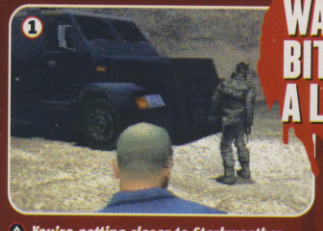


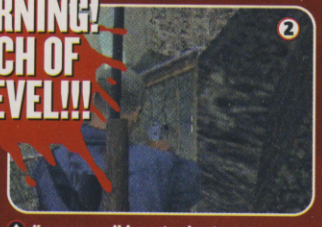
Once you're past the first save point and into the rail yard, things get tougher. There are lots of police in here, so you'll need that Uzi. Conserving ammo is still important, so try to go for close range headshots and stealth kills. A couple of the wagons have good booty inside them. Sneak up around the two guys at the end of the first yard and blast the fuel drum to finish them



In the next yard climb up the ladder on one of the wagons to reach the save point. Run off the edge of the roof towards the next wagon and you will jump. This way you can reach the painkillers, then drop through the hole to collect the sniper rifle. You need to jump from the roof of this wagon to get over the fence to continue. Before you go, get the Uzi ammo from the wagon

## 18 BORDER PATROL



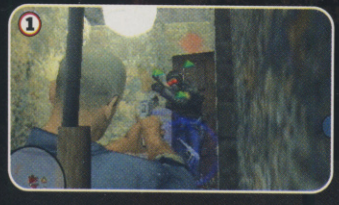


WARNING! BITCH OF A LEVEL!!!

You're getting closer to Starkweather now. Up to the first save point is straightforward. Then things get tricky. Now you've got to get into the mansion and from here there is no save point. No matter how many guards you waste, more will come. There is a choke point at the steps up to the mansion. Here there are two guards on sentry duty, as well as rooftop snipers. Avoid this area at all costs, and instead find the stairs leading up at the far side of the hedge maze

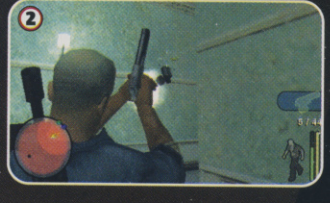
You may well have to shoot your way up here. Immediately hide in the shadows near the hedge until the coast is clear. Next up is to get into the hallway of the mansion itself. Next, head up the stairs to where the snipers are. Waste both snipers ASAP, then kill the guards and snipe any troops below. They should not be respawning anymore. Go back down to ground level, change your sniper rifle for an assault rifle and collect as much ammo as possible before going round the side of the house to finish the level

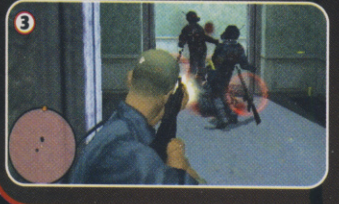
## 19 KEY PERSONNEL



From where you start, back down the stairs are painkillers and a scythe, vital if you want to go the stealth route. In order to take on the guards in a firefight, you need assault rifle ammo. In the grand dining room there is a balcony accessible by two stairwells. Up here is well-needed assault rifle ammo

Fire off a shot from outside the door where you start, and bring the guards running. The Cerberus leader that you have to kill to get his key will at some point make a move from his starting position in the pool room to go upstairs to the Head Of Security room. You can try and intercept him, but it is tricky due to guards outflanking you

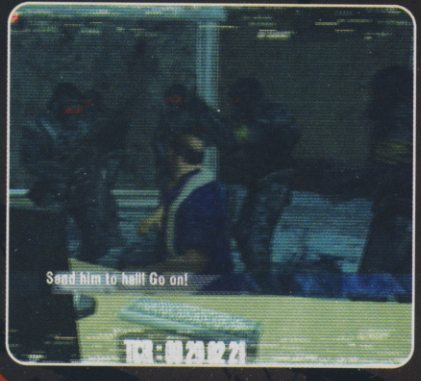




A better idea can be to slowly make your way to the room where you destroy the security camera monitors. Approach the door from either side and blast the guards one at a time, retreating as soon as you open fire. Then it's down to the basement to flick the switch to the lift power. Back up the stairs past the security rooms is the list

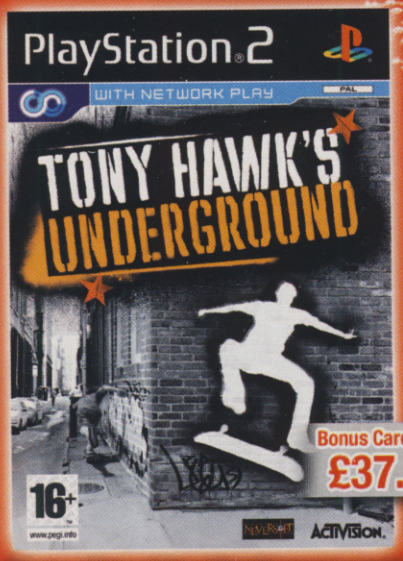
## 20 DELIVERANCE

Finally, we come face to face with Piggsy, our deranged porcine nemesis. There are three one-use green stealth kill items littered around the decrepit attic you find yourself in, as well as a painkiller. Your task is to land three stealth kills on old snout-face, at which point he'll scarper up some stairs to sulk in his room. After what you've just been through, this will be a walk in the park. Follow him to his room and he'll scarper out and up some more stairs

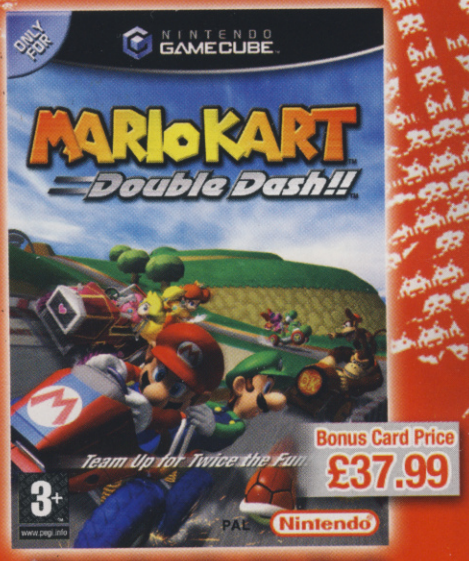



Outside Starkweather's room, lure Piggsy over the iron grille on the floor twice to finish him off. Take the chainsaw to the door and five guards will come pilling out. Run down the stairs, turn off the chainsaw and hide in the shadows. Pick the guards off one by one using the chainsaw stealth kill (using Square), but don't start its motor! Creep back up the stairs and shoot the last two guys with the assault rifle. Finally, Starkweather - kick the door in, get in close and chainsaw his guts out. Sorted!

# Make us your first stop for games this Christmas

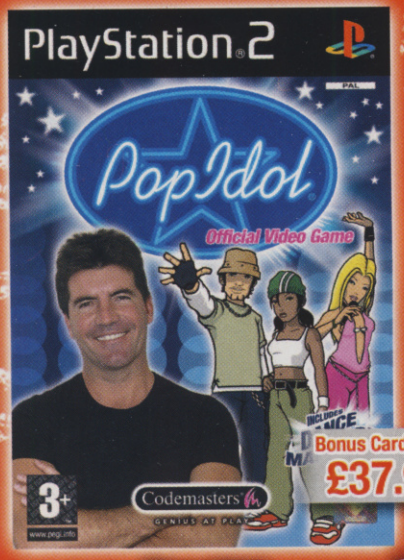



Tony Hawk's Underground
PS2 Xbox Gamecube GBA




Mario Kart Double Dash
Gamecube

Project Gotham Racing
Xbox




Pop Idol
PS2 PC

Star Wars Rebel Strike Rogue Squadron III
Gamecube

Eye Toy Groove
PS2

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# REVIEWS

FULLY INDEPENDENT & MULTI-FORMAT ● TRUST NO ONE ELSE

## CVG EXPERT REVIEWERS

Swords ever at the ready, this lot down here wrote this month's reviews

**Martin Korda**
ELVES AND SPELL BOOKS
Fighting unholy armies armed with a book of runes and a level 17 buckler may not be everyone's mug of ale, but Mighty Martin fought the Orcish threat valiantly this month

**Graeme Boyd**
SPORTS STARS AND AWARDS
Graeme had his graduation ceremony, but far more daunting than picking up his fancy qualifications was his ESPN trial by fire, reviewing this month's sports releases

**Stephen Daultrey**
ROBOTS AND GADGETS
Steve lived out two movie fantasies this month: saving the world as Terminator and Ethan Hunt. Not quite as saucy as reviewing a Debbie Does Dallas game, but hey

**Maura Sutton**
LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE
Our resident Sims starlet Maura has so many ickle Sims characters on the go on so many different games machines she could populate a small Caribbean island. Fine, we say, so long as we're invited

**Dave McComb**
'BORED' GAMES
Armed with Buckaroo, Ker-Plunk, Guess Who and Monotony, er Monopoly, Dave fully researched his Mario Party 5 review and concluded that board games are great, but videogame board games are not.



## LAST ACROSS THE FINISH LINE?

**The brain of a games publisher must be a strange and unhappy place. Who in their right mind would want reviews of their big Christmas releases to appear weeks AFTER the games go on sale?**

No publicity and no glowing reviews in the press ain't the way to smash into the charts at Number One. And yet Manhunt, 1080, Mario & Luigi and Counter-Strike to name a few are so late to arrive on our desks it's almost as if someone's ashamed of them. But these aren't videogaming dregs or lame runners in the Christmas race. These are potentially killer titles that deserve to be expertly reviewed in time for us all to make an informed choice as to what games to ask for from the millions on sale for Christmas.

Supplying late review code whatever the reason is a stupid practice, as frustrating for us as it is for you. With the likes of Manhunt flopping into the charts at a tragic number 15, maybe next year publishers might learn from their mistakes.

LEE
**Lee Skittrell**
Games Editor

## THIS MONTH


**82** 1080 Avalanche ..... GC
**84** Mission: Impossible - Operation Surma ..... PS2, XBOX
**85** RoadKill ..... PS2, XBOX
**86** Mario Party 5 ..... GC
**87** Premier Manager 03/04 ..... PS2, PC
**87** Beyblade: Super Tournament Battle ..... GC
**88** Bloody Roar Extreme ..... XBOX
**88** Bloody Roar 4 ..... PS2
**89** Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga ..... GBA
**90** The Sims Bustin' Out ..... PS2, XBOX, GC
**92** Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon ..... PS2
**92** TrackMania ..... PC
**93** Links 2004 ..... XBOX
**94** SpellForce: The Order Of Dawn ..... PC
**95** Terminator 3: Rise Of The Machines ..... PS2, XBOX
**96** Counter-Strike ..... XBOX
**98** Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone ..... PS2, XBOX, GC
**100** ESPN NBA Basketball ..... PS2, XBOX
**101** ESPN NHL Hockey ..... PS2, XBOX
**101** ESPN NFL Football ..... PS2, XBOX

## WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

We only review the biggest, most badassed and best releases of the month, and our scores are based on one key measure: fun! This is how we break them down...

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | WHY, GOD, WHY? |
| 2 | STINKS. NEVER PLAY THIS |
| 3 | A WASTE OF YOUR MONEY |
| 4 | MAYBE RENT, NEVER BUY |
| 5 | VERY AVERAGE |
| 6 | FAIRLY SOLID BUT NOWT SPECIAL |
| 7 | TASTY |
| 8 | QUALITY GAME. CONSIDER BUYING IT |
| 9 | CLASS ON A DISC |
| 10 | AN ABSOLUTE MUST. THAT DEFINES THE GENRE |

## CVG AWARDS SYSTEM

These accolades don't get dished out just because a game gets a certain score. They're CVG's way of telling you which are our pet hates and personal favourites.

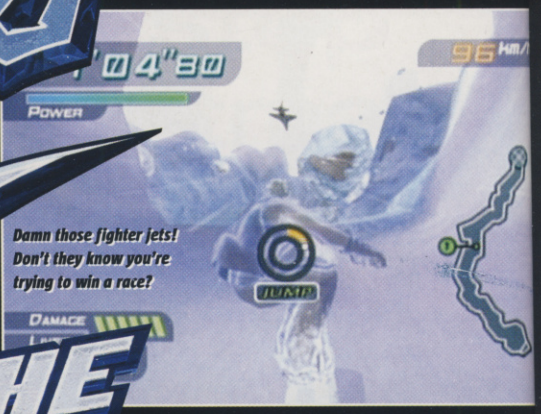
**CVG ESSENTIAL**
The most coveted award a game can get. It's worth buying the console to play the game

**CVG RECOMMENDED**
A damn good game. It may not break the mould, but it's a cut above the rest

**CVG GAME OF THE MONTH**
Doesn't have to be the highest scorer, but it's CVG's pick of the bunch this month

**CVG STINKER**
More abominable than a Yeti

# 1080° AVALANCHE




Damn those fighter jets! Don't they know you're trying to win a race?

## AN ADRENALIN RUSH AS PURE AS THE DRIVEN SNOW

**GAME INFO** | OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: NINTENDO DEV: NINTENDO WWW.NINTENDOEUROPE.COM | REVIEWED | NINTENDO GAMECUBE

This bridge collapses if you're slow, so either move your ass or grind the rail

**Arriving late to a party might make make you look fashionably cool, but the reality is that all the good booze is gone and there are only Marmite and anchovy paste puffs left to scoff.**

Nintendo's big white hope for console snowboarding excellence is very late to the party indeed. In the time it has taken Avalanche to explode onto your telly there have been three spectacular outings for SSX, and two of the more serious Amped games, as well as so many copycat snow racers it hurts. You really hope that Avalanche will pull something teeth-shatteringly grand out of the bag to steal the other games' rolling thunder. It doesn't, but that doesn't mean it's cack either...

### SWEET SMALL PACKAGES

Played in short bursts of insane arcade action, 1080 is all about feeling the powdery sprays of snow up your back as you cut a razor line down a mountain. Races are quick and tough. If you fail you lose a life and try again. Simple. It's a long way from the simulation style of Amped, and has little in common with SSX 3's freeform approach to taming the slopes. But it works. The feeling of battling the different textures of snow and ice beneath your board as you come clattering down the hillside is one of the biggest rushes available on

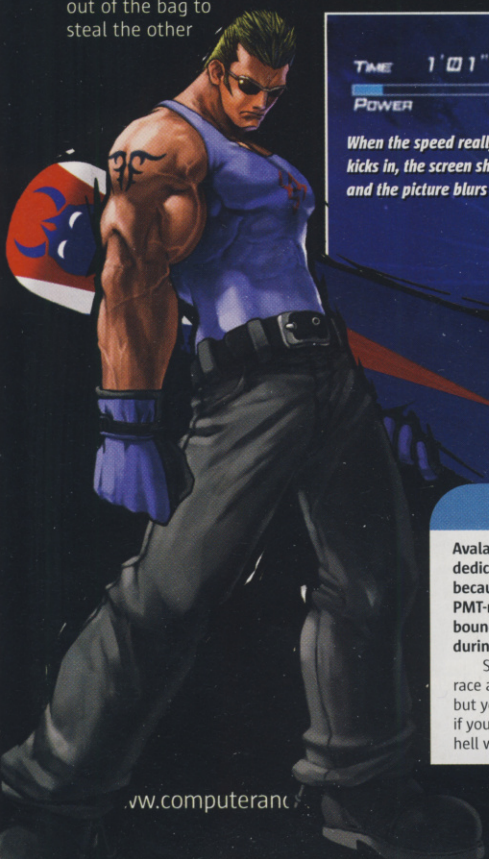
Player one grinds to glory but his rival is left eating hubcap

Anyone who says jumping from a chopper onto the course is dull needs a smack

Courses have the occasional flash of real inspiration like this sawmill

When the speed really kicks in, the screen shakes and the picture blurs

Making snow angels in the powdery stuff is no way to win you dolt



## INCOMING!

**Avalanche challenges get their own dedicated stages in the game, but because Mother Nature is a vicious old PMT-ridden hag and her fury knows no bounds, you need to watch yourself during the standard race levels too.**

Set off an avalanche during a match race and you may slow your rival down, but you'll also need nifty boarding moves if you're going to make it out of the icy hell with your nutsack intact.

You spy a shortcut - but look where it takes you

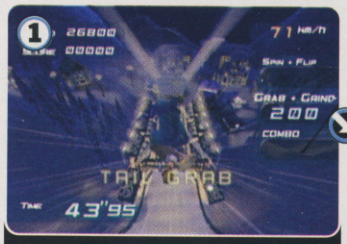
Grinding the rail sets the mountain all a-tremble

And before you know it, it's raining boulders. Gah!

## MORE WAYS TO CHILL

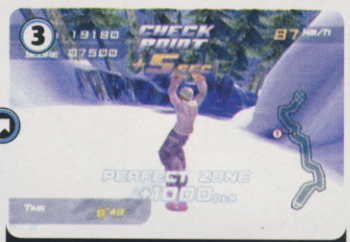
**While not as packed full of features as Amped 2 or SSX 3, 1080 at least has cool slalom levels played on the main downhill courses as the main game, as well as stunt challenges to muck about on.**

Best of all these extra ways to play are the Time Trial races, since these also help you learn the fastest racing line. Search every snowy crevice of the mountain for the hidden pieces of coins scattered about. Collect all six portions and you can use the whole coin to go towards unlocking better boards for careening down the hillside.



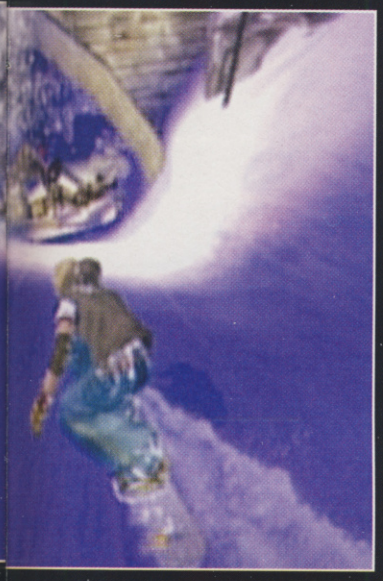

*The huge scores from the Air Make ski-jump course are worth the chapped cheeks*

*Hunting down Time Trial coins unlocks bonuses and teaches you the quickest routes*

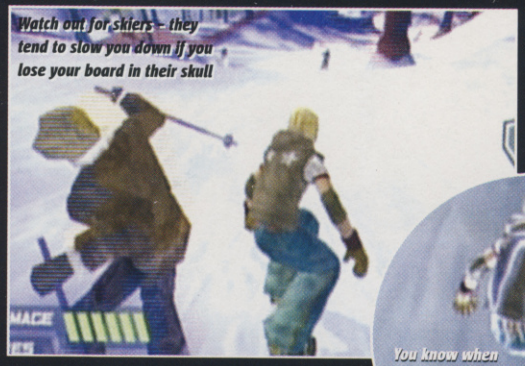



*Slalom through all of the gates in the fastest time in the Gate Race mode*

*Snow effects look cool, and you even get caked in the stuff as you race*



*Watch out for skiers – they tend to slow you down if you lose your board in their skull*

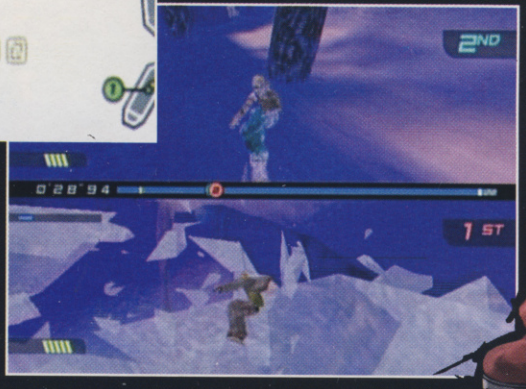


*You know when you're at full power when you see the spooky glow*

*Try tricks on the flats to boost your speed and power bar*

*Still some way to go before you beat the high score...*

*Both players are in trouble here, but at least trees are easier to avoid than ice sheets*




## KNOW THY ICONS

**As well as needing fingers so nimble they could pleasure even the baggiest and worn out of red-light ladies, you also need a keen eye in 1080.**

On-screen icons offer instructions and warnings – you need to recognise and act on them quick-time to avoid a mouthful of grubby snow.

*If you land awkwardly or wallop an obstacle, you need to rotate the stick quickly to regain your footing*

*Keep the pointer in the middle of the gauge when grinding rails to stop you falling off. It's like walking a tightrope...*

*You can only pre-wind a jump for a limited period, so watch your timing*

GameCube. The use of a time-limited pre-wind jump adds some strategy to when you decide to pull tricks and the 'wobble-o-meter' (as we like to call it) where you frantically rotate the stick to regain balance if you land iffy, adds yet more screaming panic to the racing.

The sense of speed too is incredible, and while the visuals aren't as glitzy as SSX, this feels far faster – check the way the the screen growls and shakes as you hurtle toward the finish line. If 1080 doesn't necessarily impress with the amount or originality of play modes on offer (there are all the usual suspects of racing – tricking, time trials, plus multiplayer) then it definitely more than makes up for it in the way those game modes play.

### UM, LOOK BEHIND YOU

So 1080 isn't massively original, but it does have one killer gimmick in the form of avalanches. At the end of each cup championship you race a far deadlier opponent than your sworn snowboarding rival – you race against all the might of a thundering avalanche itself. Again, simplicity is key: get to the finish line before the timer runs down or the mountain eats you for breakfast. Boulders fall from on high, sheets of ice shatter beneath your board, animals scatter and buildings give way. It's mayhem, and a real challenge. Much like the rest of the game actually. And where else can you be thrown headfirst from a helicopter, tea tray lashed to your feet as a landscape collapses behind you? Great fun.

### GAMES VERDICT

In no way revolutionary, but the avalanches are great and the racing so spot on that this could easily become your favourite 'boarding game. It's certainly close to being ours. **Lee**

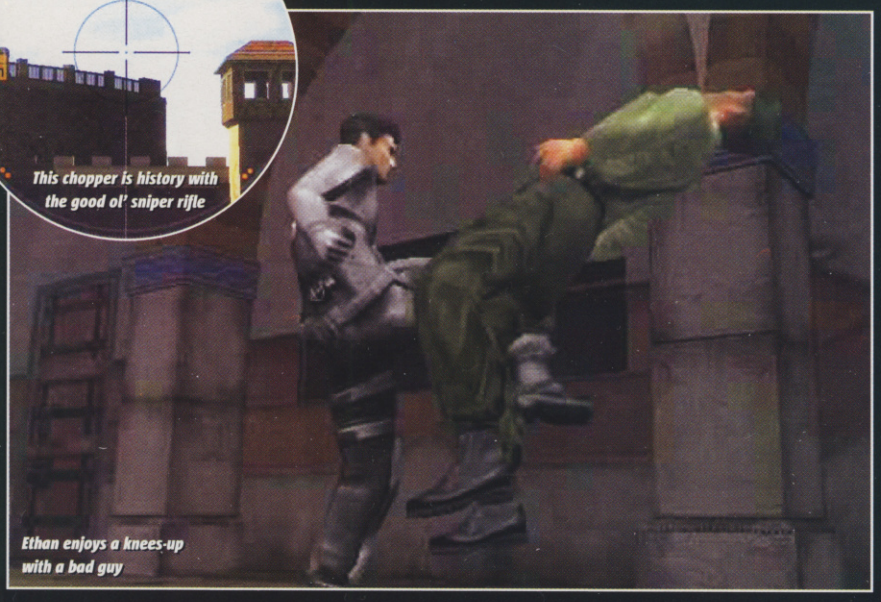
- A pure arcade racing experience
- It feels like you're really snowboarding
- Finding shortcuts never gets boring

- Doesn't do anything new
- Not as in-depth or serious as Amped
- Clichéd courses and 'xtreme' characters

**8 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... SSX 3 (PS2, XB, GC) ■ F-Zero GX (GC)

*This chopper is history with the good ol' sniper rifle*



*Ethan enjoys a knees-up with a bad guy*

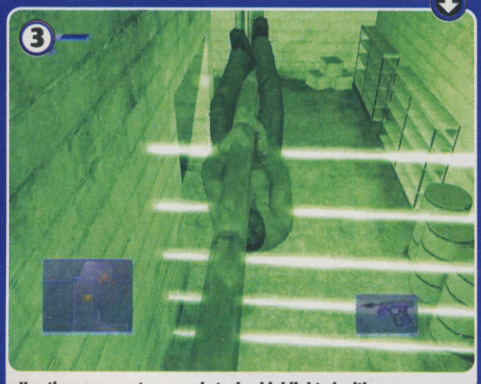
## BOX OF TRICKS

**The best thing about being an international spy is all the cool gadgets that you get to play with.**

Ethan is no different, and has a wide range of cutting-edge technology guaranteed to make fools out of the enemy. Here are just some of the basic ones...

*Shoot subjects with the EWG to monitor their whereabouts*

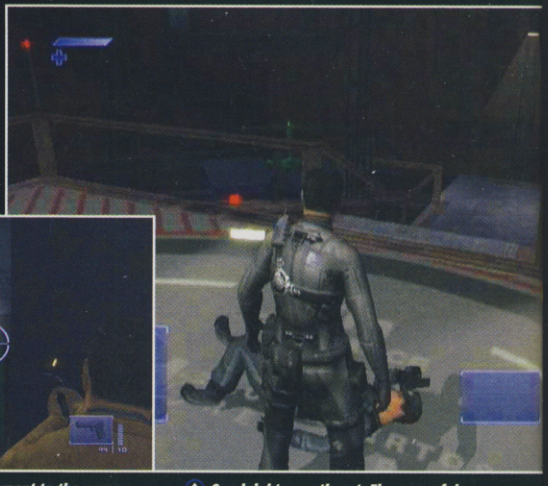
*Binoculars double as a super-powerful camera*



*Use the rope-gun to pass obstacles highlighted with your sensors*

# M:I MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

## Operation Surma

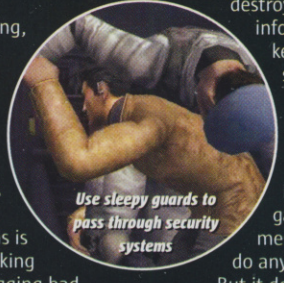


GAME INFO | OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: ATARI DEV: PARADIGM ENTERTAINMENT WWW.MI-GAME.COM | REVIEWED ON: XBOX | ALSO AVAILABLE: PS2

### READ IT QUICK, THIS REVIEW WILL SELF-DESTRUCT IN FIVE SECONDS

**The classic Metal Gear Solid taught us that stealth can be as deadly as action. Mission: Impossible is another game to trade in rocket launchers for sneak suits.**

So this is all about using your brainbox rather than steaming in, guns blazing, making more noise than a pair of mating wildebeest (and trust us, that is *loud*).



*Use sleepy guards to pass through security systems*

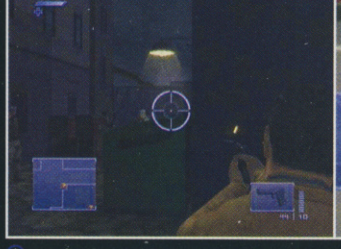
### GROOVY BABY

The key to infiltration is subtlety, and here taking out lurking goons is almost an artform. Ducking into tight gaps and plugging bad guys with tranquillisers is one way of sneaking through hostile territory. Prowling behind corners, leaping off pipes and delivering swift chops to the neck is another. Fact is, Mission: Impossible's Ethan Hunt knows a few tricks Spider-Man would be proud of.

But while this third-person spy adventure is bubbling over with stealth, overall the gameplay barely manages to stumble along, and has all the style of a twitching granny in a hard house mash-up. The missions, which are split into numerous sub-objectives, are as cheesy and hackneyed as an Austin Powers movie sequel. Taking pics of incriminating evidence with your mini-cam, destroying sensitive information and following key suspects – it all sounds interesting, but there's something repetitive about the way it's put together.

Mission: Impossible isn't a particularly bad game; aside from the messy controls, it doesn't do anything *that* wrong.

But it doesn't do a whole lot exceptionally right either. It's far too linear and lacks the nerve-battering tension and careful planning that goes with other stealth classics like Hitman 2. Budding spies who haven't ripped through Metal Gear might enjoy the tip-toeing antics of Ethan, but for everyone else this is a mediocre action adventure. Still, you can't knock that theme tune... CVG

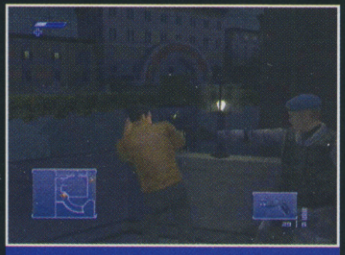


*Despite the stealth element to the game, there are still lots of shootouts to enjoy*

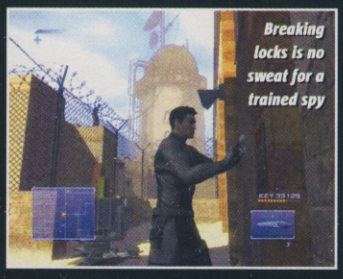


*Goodnight sweetheart. The powerful effects of a tranquilliser dart...*

*Staying out of sight behind corners lets you carry out some deadly stealth attacks*



*In this instance, however, hiding did you no good and your naff jacket gave you away*



*Breaking locks is no sweat for a trained spy*

### Games VERDICT

A passable spy fest that's a bit too dated and clichéd to truly grab you by the nuts. You'll only lap this up if you're a big fan of the movies. Or are Tom Cruise's stalker. **Stephen**

- Stealth is done well, the gameplay tense
- Cool attacks and nice cutscenes
- Decent range of gadgets for hardcore spy types
- Complicated controls that get fiddly
- Unexciting visuals with dull environments
- Guards seem to pop out of nowhere

**5 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Hitman 2 (GC, XB, PS2, PC)

# Roadkill

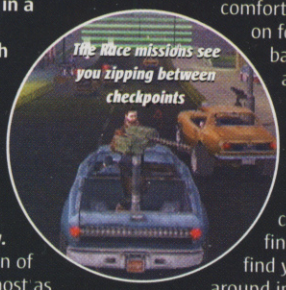
## UNLEASH YOUR ROAD RAGE ON THE FOULEST-MOUTHED MOTHERS ON FOUR WHEELS

Blast enemies and they'll drop valuable parts you can collect and trade for cash

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
ONLINE GAMING: PUB: MIDWAY DEV: TERMINAL REALITY WWW.MIDWAY.COM
REVIEWED ON: PS2 ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

Picture the scene: you've got your mates round for a Pro Evo footie-a-thon and everyone's having a laugh – until your dad gets home. Suddenly, in a misguided attempt to prove he's 'down' with 'da kidz', your old man performs his (ahem) 'hilarious' Ali G impression, prancing around in a banana yellow tracksuit and shouting "Booyakashaa!" Nasty.

Roadkill's impression of Grand Theft Auto is almost as cringeworthy. Most of the ingredients that made Rockstar's crime 'em up so successful are here but, like your dad's Pound Shop Ali G, it lacks the special *something* that made GTA so amazing.



The Race missions see you zipping between checkpoints

### POXY POST-APOCALYPSE

Part of the problem is the drearily unoriginal setting – a (yawn) disease-ravaged, post-apocalyptic future where rival crime gangs battle for supremacy – and the uninvolving plot which drops you into the middle of the mayhem as the ludicrously named driver-for-hire, Mason Strong.

More annoying is the fact you never get to leave the air-conditioned comfort of your car and explore on foot. This wouldn't be so bad if the vehicles offered a genuinely thrilling ride, but they don't. Instead, they glide and bounce around like spring-loaded shopping trolleys, while the combat lacks any real finesse or skill – often you find yourself simply driving around in a circle, hoping your enemy explodes before you do.

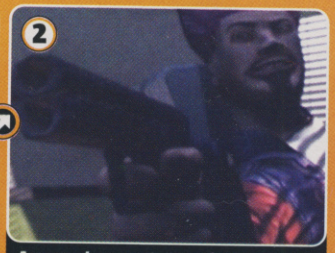
Once you get used to Roadkill's little quirks, things do improve (if nothing else, the 'extreme handling' lets you pull off some insanely impressive stunts) and you get plenty of game for your cash, but unless you're absolutely desperate for something to ease your GTA withdrawal symptoms we can't recommend this.

### STOP THAT F**KING SWEARING!

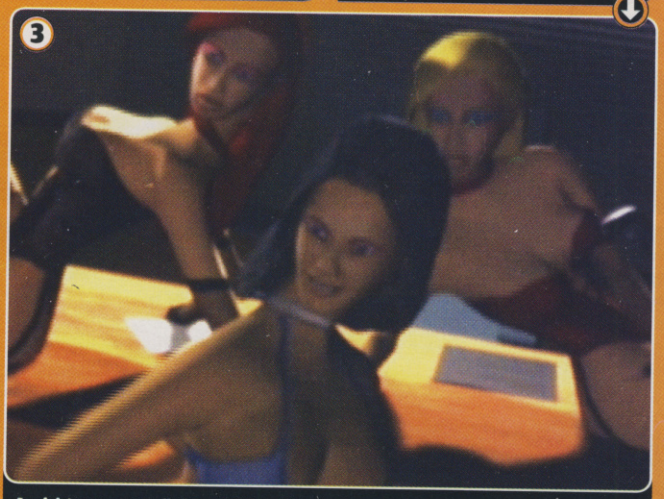
**Roadkill has an '18' rating, and it doesn't take a brainiac to see why – everything in the game seems designed to shock and outrage the average Daily Mail reader.**

However, this slightly desperate attempt to give the game an 'adult' edge doesn't quite work – the end result is so over the top that it's almost cartoonish.

Everyone and anything is fair game – and that includes pedestrians. Just mount the pavement and crush the fools to a pulp

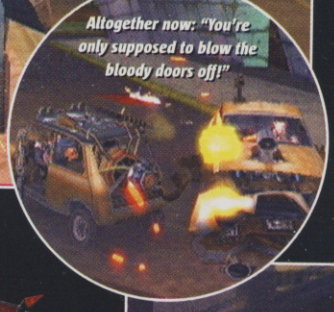


Everyone has a nasty case of potty mouth in Roadkill – even the radio DJs cuss like they're suffering from Tourette's

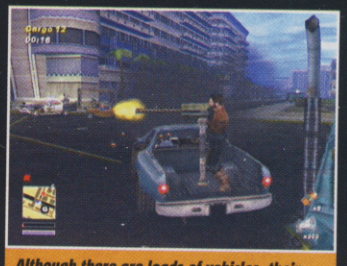


Feminists are sure to find Roadkill insulting, as the women you meet are mainly Jordan-esque mammary monstrosities who do little more than giggle and wiggle

You can buy upgrades for your vehicle in the shop, including go-faster nitro boosts

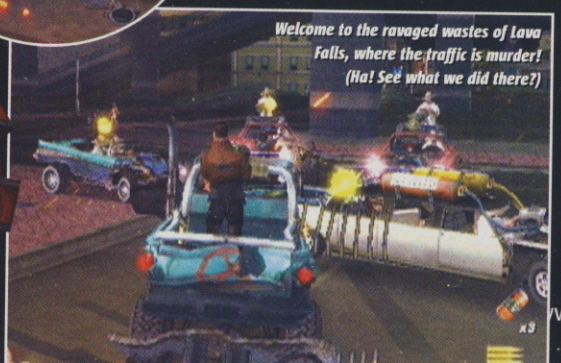


Altogether now: "You're only supposed to blow the bloody doors off!"



Although there are loads of vehicles, their handling doesn't differ all that much

Mission-critical vehicles or items are highlighted by an arrow. Handy



Welcome to the ravaged wastes of Lava Falls, where the traffic is murder! (Ha! See what we did there?)

### Computer and Video Games VERDICT

Although clearly, er, 'inspired' by GTA, Roadkill lacks that classic's depth and grittiness. But assuming you can stomach its childish shock tactics, it's still fairly entertaining. **Dave U**

- You're never more than seconds from a ruck
- Loads of missions and stuff to collect
- Excessively sweary and sickeningly violent

- There's not an original gear in its chassis
- 'Floaty' vehicle handling
- Excessively sweary and sickeningly violent

**5 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Grand Theft Auto 3 (PS2, XB) The Getaway (PS2)

## TELL ME A STORY

**Although Mario Party 5 is still best with four players, the singleplayer experience has been improved by the addition of a story mode where you compete against the Koopa Kids.**

Waiting times are reduced as all players move at the same time, but there's still a lot of thumb-twiddling as you wait for the computer-controlled players to do their thing.

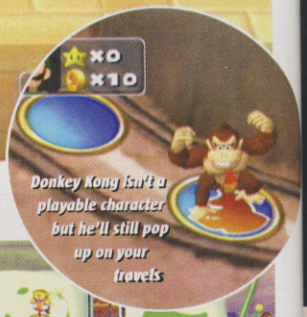
*Bowser sends one of the Koopa Kids to hassle Mario and his mates. You talkin' to me?*

*By a strange biological trick, the Koopa Kid splits into three, and the games begin*

*All the Koopas move at the same time, cutting down on the waiting times. Makes a change*

# MARIO PARTY 5

*The lovey-dovey fluffy-wuffy boards are beginning to grate*



*Donkey Kong isn't a playable character but he'll still pop up on your travels*

GAME INFO

OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: NINTENDO1 DEV: HUDSON SOFT
WWW.NINTENDO-EUROPE.COM

REVIEWED ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE

## NOT THE SORT OF PARTY YOU'D WANT TO BE SEEN AT

**Over the past few years we've been invited to candy-coloured parties by Sonic, Shrek, Disney and even the kids from South Park. But even though Nintendo's bashes have always been the best, the fifth Mario Party game fails to bring anything new to the series, and suffers from the same problems that have marred the series since it first appeared on the N64.**

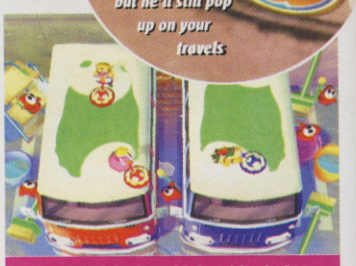
### PARTY POOPER

Mario Party 5 features more than 70 new mini-games, most of which are fun and imaginative. The on-board action has also been improved by adding huge gumball machines that spit out capsules containing random power-ups for buggering up your opponent. But, despite this being the fifth edition, the developers *still* haven't sorted out the tedious waiting times. Whether playing with three friends or against the computer, it's boring to hang around while others take their turn and, even worse, the quirky cutscenes quickly become dull, especially when you've seen the same rubbish a thousand times. You can't even skip them, Goddammit!

The graphics are also beginning to show their age, with chunky characters that look exactly the same as they did last year and boards that are bland in comparison to other graphical delights glimpsed on the GameCube recently.

Essentially, Mario Party 5 is for kids. And even though we all enjoyed musical chairs and pinning the tail on the donkey as nippers, we're all a little old for this sort of thing now. Give us something with guns 'n' girls any day. CVG

*You can unlock new play modes that allow you to head straight for the mini-games*



*The game can be fun with four friends, but the singleplayer experience is just lame*

*Players move faster and you can speed up the message text, but there's still too much hanging around*

*The mini-games are great and require the lightning-fast reactions of a mountain goat*

*The Bonus mode contains a selection of mini challenges, including this volleyball game*

### computer and video games VERDICT

Another game falls off the Mario Party assembly line and, not surprisingly, it's virtually identical to last year's edition. Don't bother, even if you love Mario. **David**

- Fun with four players
- All your favourite Nintendo characters
- Story mode improves singleplayer

- Too... much... waiting
- Can't... skip... cutscenes
- Make... it... stop

**5 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... Hanging out with six-year-olds

# BEYBLADE VFORCE

SUPER TOURNAMENT BATTLE

Four-player ruckus? Only if you think falling asleep is fun

Wild, yes. And those graphics add to the fun...

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: ATARI DEV: TAKARA
WWW.UK.ATARI.COM
REVIEWED ON: NINTENDO GAMECUBE

## WHY BOTHER WHEN THE REAL THING IS SO MUCH MORE FUN?

**This digital simulation of the insanely popular spinning top game and TV show joins the likes of the chocolate fireguard and Nokia N-Gage (hoh!) as the most useless invention ever.**

We love Beyblade, but this videogame version offers very little that you can't do when playing with real-life tops that cost a fraction of the price.

Think of the possibilities for a wicked-cool Beyblade title. You could have magic attacks, amazing bolt-ons and upgrades that send sparks and fireballs slamming around the screen, amazing multi-levelled battle arenas with obstacles like wrecking balls and spiky traps.

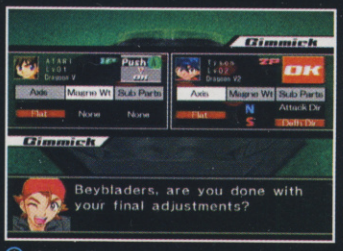
Or, more accurately, 'Rip-off!' Don't buy this game kids

### WASTE DISPOSAL

But there's nothing like that here, only a very dull, very shabby-looking non-game with very little in the way of actual gameplay. Once you've let rip with your top (with a single button press), you have little control over where it spins. Not that you'll care as you'll be too busy weeping about your wasted cash. Vile.

Make your Cube look like a Sega Saturn!

Maybe this commentator guy is on some kind of game-enhancing stimulant




These adjustments and tweakings don't really make a difference. Good, eh?

### CVG VERDICT

Remedial gameplay and minimal presentation. This is a waste of even the most die-hard fan's cash. There's a great Beyblade game crying out to be made, but this ain't it. **Lee**

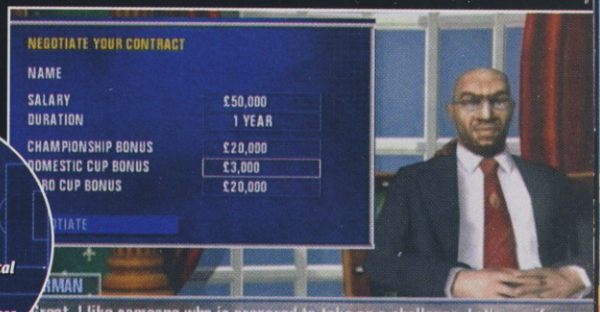
- The box art is quite pretty
- You could wear the disc as a medallion
- There are no more pluses

- There's not really a game here
- So many wasted opportunities
- It's full price for nothing in return

**2 OUT OF TEN**

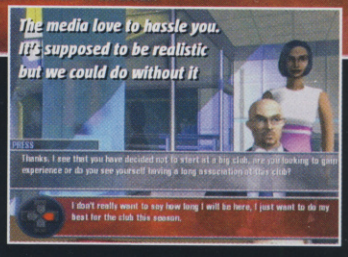
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... Popping your eyes out with a soup spoon

# PREMIER MANAGER 03-04



Manage teams from the top divisions in five European countries

You can negotiate your salary, but what's the point?




**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: ZOO DIGITAL GROUP DEV: ZOO DIGITAL GROUP
WWW.ZOODIGITALGROUP.COM
REVIEWED ON: PS2
ALSO AVAILABLE: PC GBA

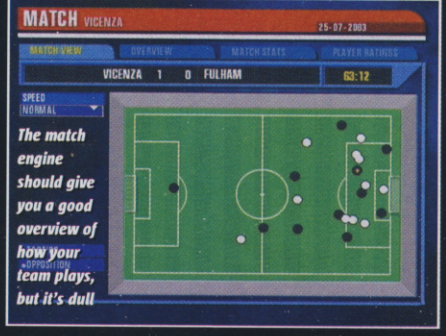
## FOOTY MANAGEMENT THAT'S MORE VAUXHALL CONFERENCE THAN PREMIER LEAGUE

**Even if you love football management games you have to admit they look dull. Pro Evo and FIFA reflect the glamour of multi-million superstars like Beckham. Management games put you in the shoes of a ruddy-faced pensioner like Alex Ferguson.**

But even with such low visual expectations Premier Manager looks about as impressive as your local pub team. It's devoid of any of the passion the sport thrives on, the text menus are so dense they make football hooligans look like geniuses and the control system used to navigate through them feels broken.

Which would be fine if the game nestling underneath was Premier League. It's not. There's a distinct lack of useful stats, matches are played out in a bargain bin version of Champ Manager's engine, and the endless meetings, where you respond to boring guff with daft responses, are a frustrating complication. Getting information and negotiating terms should be a fluid pleasure, not a chore.

It's a shame because Premier Manager is a series with a proud history. But then, Bury won the FA Cup in 1900 and look at them now.




### CVG VERDICT

We played management games ten years ago with better interfaces, more exciting match engines, and cooler strategy. In desperate need of a Roman Abrahmovic-style saviour. **Graeme**

- It's better than being forced to play Sunday morning football wearing only your pants
- On second thoughts, it's not

- Terrible menu system
- Graphics drawn with Crayolas
- Little feeling of influence on your team

**3 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... LMA Manager 2003 (PS2)

# 真紅北 BLOODY ROAR 4

GAME INFO | OUT: DECEMBER 31 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-2 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: KONAMI DEV: HUDSON SOFT WWW.KONAMI.COM/BLOODYROAR4 | REVIEWED ON: PS2

*The blue bar underneath your health is your morph energy. If it empties you change back*

*We haven't quite worked out what Xion's supposed to be. A shiny armadillo?*

## SHAPE-SHIFTING BEAT 'EM UP STUCK FIRMLY IN THE PAST

**Here at CVG we remember a time when you had to go to the fag-stinking local arcade armed with a pocket full a change for some quality beat 'em up action.**

Once there you had to queue for ages just to get demolished by some kid everyone idolised at the time, but these days probably cleans chewing gum off the seats in a Happy Eater just past Junction 20 of the M1.

That's what playing Bloody Roar 4 reminds us of – our wasted youth spent in smelly, sticky-carpeted digital hell-holes. Which is sort of nice, simply because of the nostalgia, but at the same time it's a bit mince. It's 2K3, (almost 2k4 fergawd's sake) we want something a bit more up to date and cutting edge, okay?

### HEAR IT ROAR

But this is such old-fashioned beat 'em up fare that it should be wearing tartan slippers and eating Pontefract cakes. Sure, you can save up energy and then turn into a bloody great beast, but it's just a gimmick really.

Bloody Roar isn't original enough to innovate and isn't polished enough to epitomise the genre like Soulcalibur II does. But it's number four in the series so there must be plenty of you who love that authentic 1994 arcade feel, right? Right?

*The blood flows thick and fast, but there's no damage to the characters*

*Sultry bat-minx Jenny's got boobs that jiggle realistically and razor sharp claws*

*It's blind and lives underground – a mole is hardly the best choice of animal*

*The extra power of the Xbox makes a fine show of itself. That thing's as big as the screen!*

*The backgrounds are a lot more interesting but still far too small for a proper scrap*

### computer and video games VERDICT

Feels strangely stuck in time, like it's a portal to a weird parallel universe where mid-Nineties beat 'em ups are the only type of game you're allowed to play. You deserve better. **Graeme**

- Nice big characters
- Loads of blood and flashy lights
- Career mode extends interest

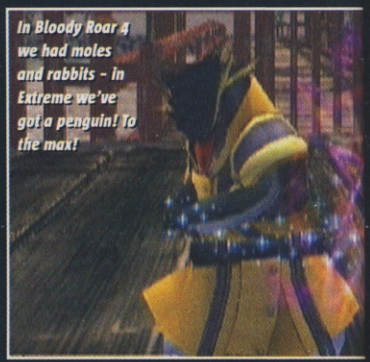
- Seriously old-skool
- Feels pretty unsophisticated
- Some of the animals look well stupid

**6 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Soulcalibur II (PS2, GC, XB)

# BLOODY ROAR extreme

*Characters are bigger and shinier than on the PS2. Wouldn't want this in your bath*



*In Bloody Roar 4 we had moles and rabbits – in Extreme we've got a penguin! To the max!*

GAME INFO | OUT: NOVEMBER 28 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-2 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: KONAMI DEV: HUDSON SOFT WWW.KONAMI.COM | REVIEWED ON: XBOX

## UNLEASH THE BEAST AND GO FOR A SLASH ON YOUR XBOX

**Deezo – it's been like going for a joyride in Marty McFly's DeLorean playing these Bloody Roar games. While the PS2 version was a bumpy ride back in time, accompanied by mild time-travel sickness, this Xbox exclusive slammed us back to the future with a huge, but pleasant, bang.**

This is Bloody Roar Extreme, the first outing for the game on Xbox. It's really just a special edition collating the characters from the series, but the difference in quality is enough to make this stand out from its PS2 homie.

### BLOODY GOOD

First of all, and naturally given the power of the Box, the graphics are astonishingly good. But while in Soulcalibur II the difference in graphics between PS2 and Box was merely cosmetic, the improvement here seems to invest the whole package with much more quality. Second, the instant hit the Arcade mode gives you is much more satisfying. The simplistic fighting remains a bit basic for fans accustomed to the ninth-dan finger acrobatics of Virtaul Fighter 4 and Soulcalibur, and the PS2's career mode is sadly lacking, but at least it feels like you're really slashing the crap out of your opponent.

Bloody Roar 4 left us feeling a bit weird about its retro styling, but Extreme sits favourably next to other contemporary fighters. It's by no means a heavyweight, but fans of the series will get a hell of a kick out of the Xbox conversion.

### computer and video games VERDICT

Made us feel more comfortable than the PS2 version but still lacking the 'oomph' the best beat 'em ups should have. Fight game veterans will tame this beast in no time. **Graeme**

- Sumptuous visuals
- Skin-ripping combos
- Bloody massive characters

- Not much blood
- More silly animals
- Small fighting arenas

**7 OUT OF TEN**

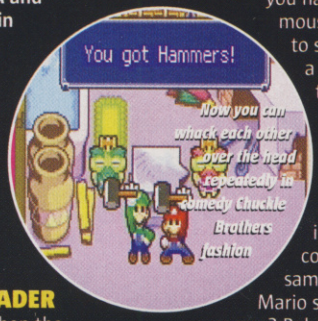
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... Soulcalibur II (PS2, GC, XB)

# MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA

## PROOF THAT TWO MOUSTACHES ARE BETTER THAN ONE

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £29.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: NINTENDO DEV: ALPHADREAM CORPORATION
WWW.NINTENDO.COM/GAMES/GAMEPAGE/GAMEPAGE_MAIN.JSP?GAMEID=1854
REVIEWED ON GAME BOY ADVANCE

**We've been dissing Nintendo for its lazy Mario remakes on GBA and guess what we get in return? An all-new, unique Mario adventure, that's what. A chubbilicious smoothie of quality handheld gaming, mixing platforming and role-playing. Cool.**




### FOLLOW THE LEADER

Your quest begins when the brothers crashland in Beanbean Kingdom and have to find their way home, rescuing Princess Peach's lost voice along the way. Missions are seamlessly blended, with the game playing more like Zelda than Mario.

Where it differs, however, is in the battles. These are turn-based, but with elements of real-time combat. Button presses during each player's turn add power to your attacks, or help you defend by leaping Bullet Bills or hammers coming at you from behind enemy lines. It's a cool mixture, and a brand new way to play Mario.

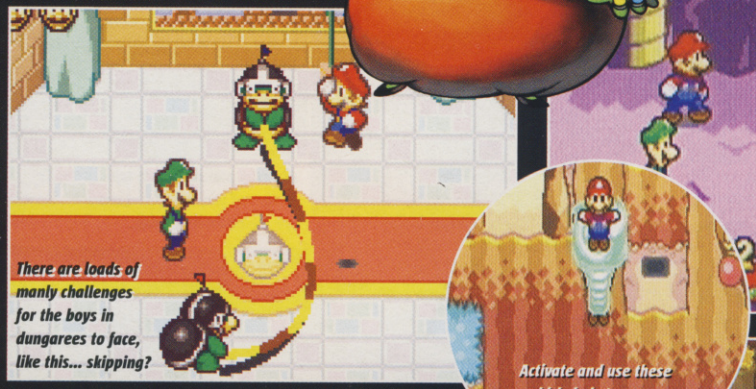
The one problem with the game is that cycling through the Brothers' many different moves and skills with the shoulder buttons isn't very streamlined. The way you have to make both moustachioed dudes jump to scale obstacles is also a bit whiffy. Aside from these niggles, it's a cracking role-player that should appeal to more than just orc-lovers. We're still going to get our moan in, though. Why does it come bundled with the same sorry old multiplayer Mario seen in the other games? Bah! CVG

## HEY FATTY BOOM BOOM

**One of the best things about Superstar Saga is the game's quirky sense of humour.** Mario opens the game in his underwear, Luigi does the monkey on the level-up screen and you meet crazy folks like Blablanadon, the pteradon-like dude who just won't shut up. Mental.

*The humour transfers into the game mechanics for solving puzzles, too*

*Fill Mario with water then get Luigi to leap onto his bro for instant firehose action*




*There are loads of manly challenges for the boys in dungarees to face, like this... skipping?*

*Beanbean is such a nice place, even the bad guys praise you when you trounce them*



*Activate and use these whirlwinds to access puzzling platforms hidden out of reach*

## DOUBLE TEAM DUDES

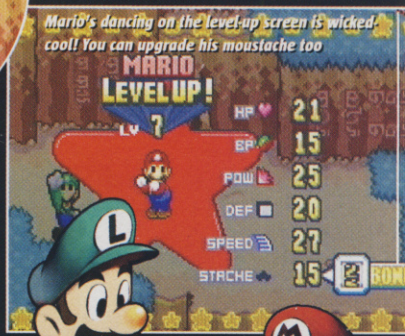
**Two brothers are better than one, particularly in battle.** Special Bros Attacks are tricky to pull off, but the damage dished out if successful is well worth the busted fingers. The Brothers learn more moves as they gain new items and abilities, too.

*Luigi starts his Bounce Bros Attack. Press B when he flashes green*

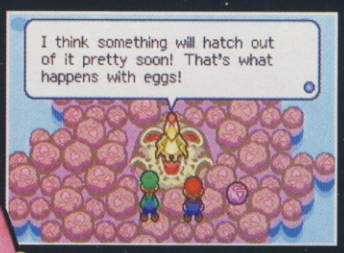
*Finish the move with a well-timed tap of B to boost the move's power even more*

*Now quickly press A when Mazza glows red to give Luigi a height boost. He's not such a midget now*

*Syrup replenishes the points needed to pull spectacular combined Bros Attacks*




*Mario's dancing on the level-up screen is wicked cool! You can upgrade his moustache too*




*Blablanadon doesn't shut up. Must be in awe of all the stars of the Mushroom Kingdom*

## computer and video games VERDICT

Quirky, cool and at long bloomin' last it's an original Mario adventure. Mostly excellent, but the controls are fiddly and the turn-based fights won't be for everyone. **Lee**

- ■ An enormous, mad world to explore
- ■ Combine the Brothers' skills to solve puzzles
- ■ Loads of cool items to muck about with

- ■ RPG-haters won't like the combat much
- ■ It's not a new Mario platformer
- ■ What's with the rubbish multiplayer?

**8 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... ■ Final Fantasy Tactics Advance (GBA)

# The Sims Bustin' Out

GAME INFO | OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-2 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: EA DEV: MAXIM | WWW.EAGAMES.COM | NEITHER ON XBOX AVAILABLE | GC GBA PS2

## EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF WORLD DOMINATION. HOLD TINY PEOPLE IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND AND MAKE THEM DO YOUR BIDDING

Puddles of pee on the floor, a dirty ring round the bath, flies buzzing around festering piles of rubbish. Sounds like a scene from the latest Sims game, right? Wrong! This is what your house will be like once you get hooked on The Sims Bustin' Out.

You'll devote your days to tending to your little Sim's every whim. You'll pamper them in hot tubs, tuck them in at night and even talk to them in that strange Sim gibberish speech. But that's okay. There are millions out there like you.

### MIND CONTROL

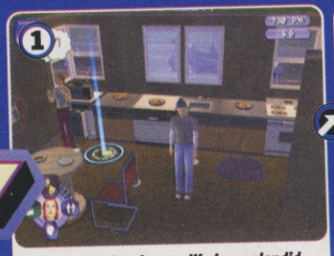
While some may be heartily sick of the Sims phenomenon, it's clear that the franchise is as popular as ever. The console versions may not have the gameplay depth of the PC series, but Bustin' Out deftly side-steps the disadvantages and enhances the more console-friendly elements. The controls will never be as fluid as they are on PC, and your Sims still move at an infuriatingly slow rate, but at least you now have a speed-up button (R1) to fast forward the action if you want to.

At the start, you get to create your own Sim from various body parts and

**WARNING!**
GameCube owners: you need a **MASSIVE** memory card with more than 161 blocks free before the game will even load in! Good luck finding one in the shops...

## SIM LIFE SWAP

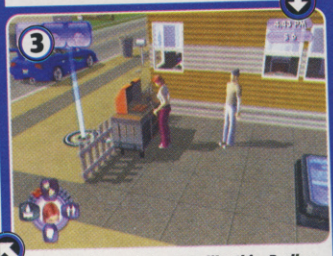
In the sort of cutting-edge experiment that only CVG would ever dare to attempt, we split two Sim couples up and observed their social intercourse. And that's not rude, it's a scientific term. Probably. Think of it like Wife Swap on your console...



*Tru gives up her former life in a splendid, luxurious Gothic manor to live in Dudley's stinky trailer for a week*

*Bella gets the better half of the deal in our opinion, moving in with the hunky Spike and his big organ*

*Meanwhile Bella never had it so good. She's getting waited on hand and foot by Spike. What a gent he is, eh ladies?*



*Pampered Tru ain't gonna like this. Dudley forces the poor girl to clear up the trash and cook him grits on the barbecue*

*At Gothic Manor, ornate topiary (that's hedges to you, mate) and cucumber sarnies are the order of the day...*

*But it's a different kettle of caviar for Tru. Gardening in the trailer park involves pruning cacti and fighting off mosquitos*

**SIM LIFE SWAP CONCLUSION:** Being rich is more fun than being poor. Go figure

*Bing Bling frequents Club Rubb and likes to visit your Mom. Which is a bit of a worry*

*In Free Mode you get to hang out with lots of weird people, but, er, that's about all you do...*

*You now have more choice when it comes to creating your Sim's look and personality*

*The colour green starts to rule your life as you check your Sim's 'key motives'*

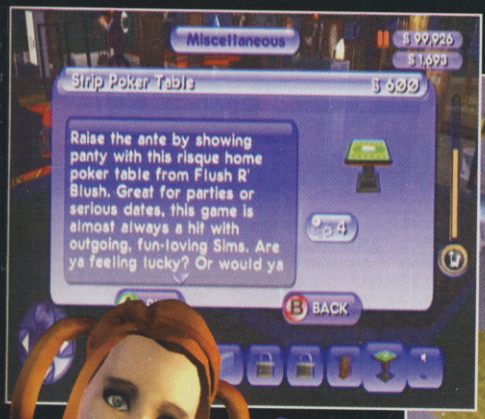
There are ten new careers for your Sim, including Mad Scientist

In two-player mode you can play the whole game either with or against a friend

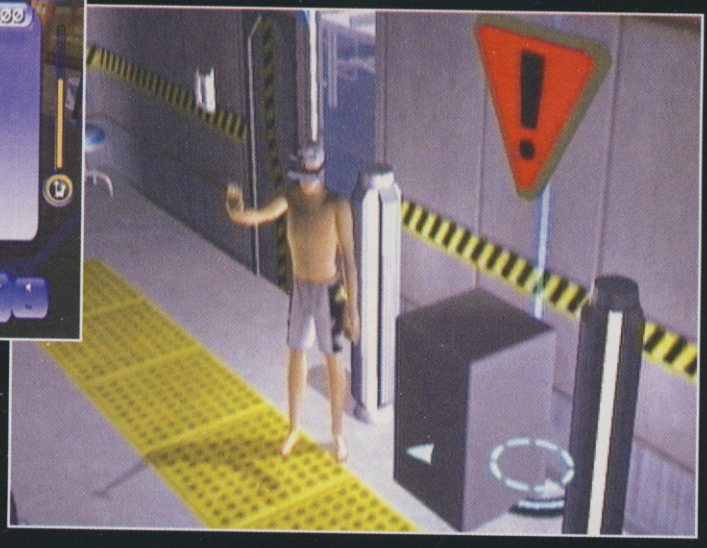
Life can be fun when you're a member of the trailer elite...

Customising your very own Sim can be an - ahem - uniquely satisfying experience.

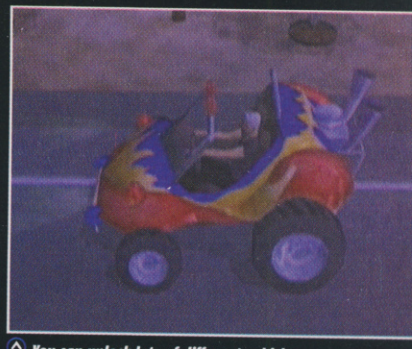
Who do you think added the blurry bits. Us or the game's developers? Clue: it wasn't us




You can give your Sim 'free will' to think for him or herself



Just like real life, spend every penny of your hard-earned Simoleons on wacky gadgets you'll never actually use



You can unlock lots of different vehicles, but you can't drive them yourself. Pah!

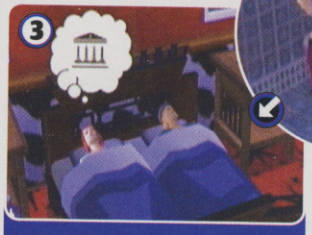
## SEX AND THE SIM CITY

**Single and totally hopeless in love? Who cares, when your Sim can be sweet talking, back rubbing and before too long French kissin' a hunk or honey.**

Let's be honest here. What most Sims fans do is spend an inordinate amount of time trying to get some blurry bits Sim-on-Sim action going on. Or is that just us? What do you mean it's just us?

It all starts with an innocent 'back rub', nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no more

Then, before you can say Sim in love, you'll move on to a bit of hugging and kissing. Tongues are optional for this part



Finally, you actually end up in bed together. It's very tasteful though. Pity

funky new clothes. For some reason there's a parrot looking on as you do this. Weird.

This time around the Sim models are much more expressively animated and detailed. You get to pick everything from their eye colour to nose type, and more clothing and appearance options can be unlocked as you complete goals during gameplay. You can even choose personality traits. A shy, retiring or just plain cranky Sim will find it harder to make friends or to get promoted in people-friendly careers such as Fashion Victim or Movie Star. As a Counter Culture Vandal, however, they'll be perfect.

### MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE

As with the previous Sims console outings, Story mode is the main focus of the gameplay. This time evil (and very pale) millionaire Malcolm is stealing Sims' gadgets and gizmos with his fiendish vaporising prod. It's your task to get a job, move out of Mom's house and eventually earn enough money to get your stuff back. You can only get promoted if you learn skills, make friends and generally keep those green 'key motive' meters topped up. And yes, that includes walking them to the loo and making sure they keep their little tums filled. Each time you move into a new house you will have goals to fulfil, such as tricking someone to pull your finger so that you can fart in their face. Strange how that doesn't usually work for us in job interviews.

The differences between the console formats have been fully acknowledged. The Xbox has clearly the best graphics, the PS2 has an exclusive online option where you can trade items with other players. The GameCube and GBA versions have possibly the most exciting exclusive option, with players able to download special mini-games to their GBA which will earn them Simoleons and other goodies to use in the Cube game.

### GAMES VERDICT

The Sims is not for everyone, and can be frustrating at times, but Bustin' Out is a fine attempt to properly present the phenomenon to the console generation. **Maura**

- Lots of console-exclusive gameplay tweaks
- Typical Sims humour, including lots of fart, burp and pee gags. Gotta love it!
- Can't drive your own vehicles around town
- Too slow for action junkies
- Can't see your Sim in action in the workplace.

**7 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... The Sims Online (PC) The Sims Unleashed (PC)

# CROUCHING TIGER HIDDEN DRAGON

## A TIGER WITH NO BITE AND BREATH LIKE AN OLD DRAGON

You can counter and perform reversals of moves, but it's all a bit hit and miss

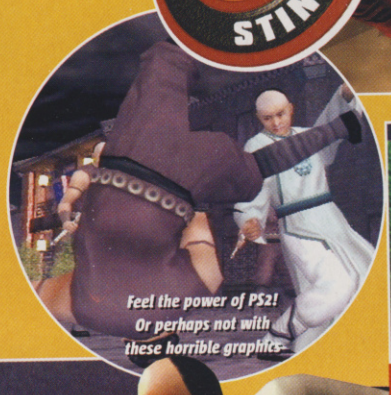
**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: UBISOFT DEV: GENKI
WWW.UBI.COM/UK/GAMES/CROUCHINGTIGERHIDDENDRAG ONPS2
REVIEWED ON PS2

**Life is full of questions. Like, how is it possible for developers to squander such an awesome movie licence, packed full of superb possibilities for cool gameplay features, on such a terrible game? Or, how has it taken three years of development to erase any of the mysticism and magic from the Oscar-winning movie?**

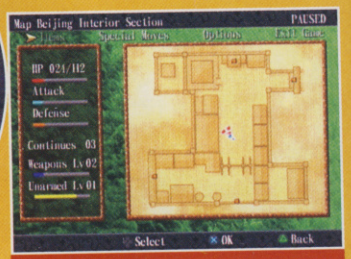
### WUDAN TASTES THE PAIN

Like being stripped naked and bound to a lamppost in the town square and ritually pelted with rotting sheep eyeballs (it happened to Mike, once) playing Crouching Tiger is a disturbing, shameful and joyless experience. Structured as a series of brawls, there's minimal interaction with anything other than your enemy's pulpy bulk, resulting in seriously one-dimensional gameplay.

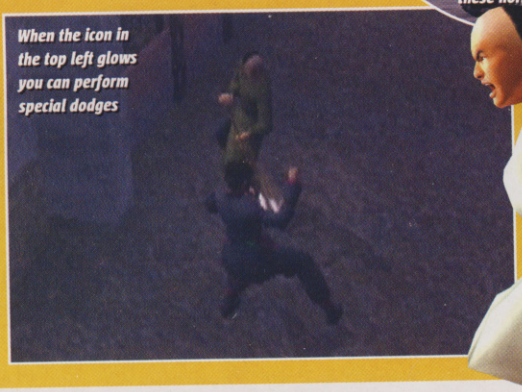
The combat controls and your heroes' moves have none of the flair of the Wudan martial art style they're supposed to emulate, and the whole thing is reduced to a shambolic mess of button bashing. The fact that the Crouching Tiger movie experience is so cherished by fans makes the game's awfulness even more embarrassing. CVG



Feel the power of PS2! Or perhaps not with these horrible graphics




The character development stuff feels tacked on. Like, "Oh, let's have some stats..."



When the icon in the top left glows you can perform special dodges

### COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES VERDICT

Did the developers even get round to watching the movie? This is a shocking waste of such a fertile licence. It could have been great, instead, it's poo. **Lee**

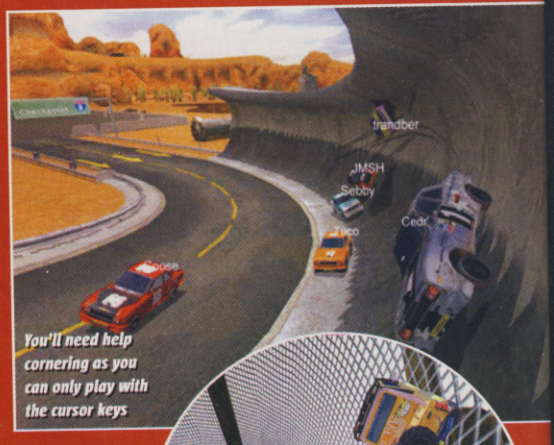
- The DVD footage from the movie looks as lovely as ever
- You can use a sword to slice up your enemies
- Totally misses the point of the movie
- Boring, repetitive, half-arsed gameplay
- Terrible graphics and poor level design

**3 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Shinobi (PS2) Rygar: LA (PS2, XB)

# TrackMania

## ROLLERCOASTER RACING WHERE YOU BUILD THE TRACK!




You'll need help cornering as you can only play with the cursor keys

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £29.99 PLAYERS: 1-8
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: DIGITAL JESTERS DEV: NADEO
WWW.DIGITALJESTERS.CO.UK
REVIEWED ON PC CD ROM

The minimal detail in the visuals means you can put loads of wacky pieces together

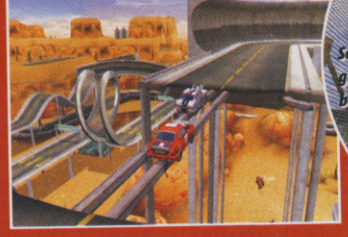
**Tired of the same old tracks like Monte Carlo and Silverstone in racing games? Then why not make your own? We've got loop-de-loops, hump-de-humps and swooshing wiremesh sections that look like something from a Sonic game...**

There are a bunch of different locations like forest, desert and winter wonderland

### GAME OF TWO HALVES

There are two main modes in Trackmania: Race, and Puzzle. Race sees you drive your motor across a series of ever wilder and more frightening courses. It's fun but limited, and the handling feels five years old – it's nowhere near as slick Gran Turismo or Need For Speed.

What saves the game is the ace puzzle mode. In a series of challenges, you need to build the track using the pieces supplied to make sure you get to the finish line in the shortest possible time. There are over 200 unique track blocks to build with, and the building and racing action is addictive. The game looks rubbish but at least it will work on most PCs, and there's a whole Internet community for the game too, where ten of you can play on even the slowest connection. Original and fun, just don't expect fireworks. CVG



Screamin' if you want to go faster! Swooping bends are wicked

Building courses is done via an interface so easy even your nan could work it out

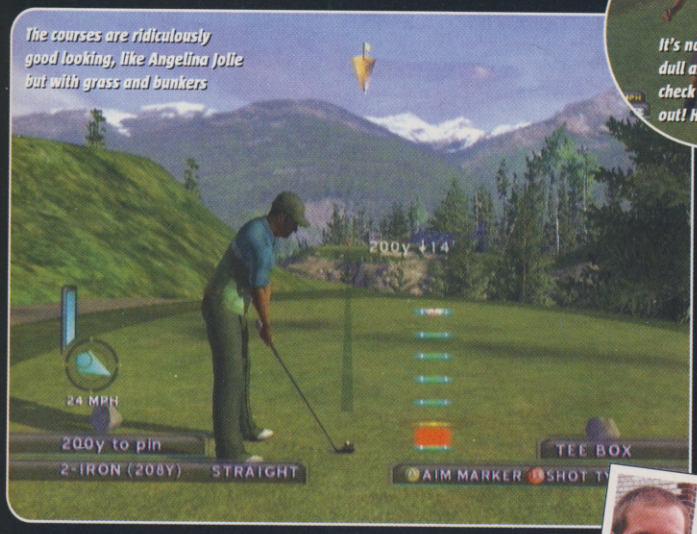
### COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES VERDICT

The no-frills production values stink a bit, but if you can get past that the game is actually pretty fun to play – especially on the Net. A cool attempt at something new. **Lee**

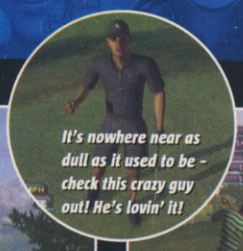
- Crazy courses that you build yourself
- Simple yet addictive gameplay all can enjoy
- Cool email and Internet play options
- Car handling really lets the game down
- Graphics are far from spectacular
- It feels like a low-budget game

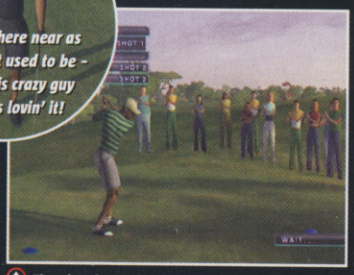
**6 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Smash Cars (PS2) Stunt Race FX (SNES)



The courses are ridiculously good looking, like Angelina Jolie but with grass and bunkers


It's nowhere near as dull as it used to be - check this crazy guy out! He's lovin' it!


The visuals are let down by the terrible crowd. They look like burns victims, bless 'em

There's a wide range of clothing but no option to create a character from scratch

# Links 2004

## MICROSOFT'S LEGEND TAKES ON THE TIGER FOR THE GOLF GAME GRAND SLAM

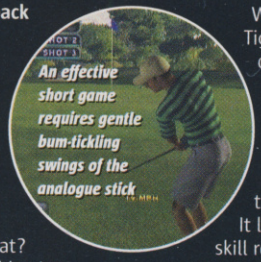
GAME INFO | OUT: NOVEMBER 26 | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-16 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS | DEV: MICROSOFT | WWW.XBOX.CO.UK | REVIEWED ON XBOX

**Links has been around almost as long as golf itself. It's the kind of game your dad installed on his PC at work back in the 15th century.**

And what does your dad know about games? 'Xactly. The PC games were dull and old-fashioned, like a crusty golf club where all the men wear pee-stained plus-fours.

Hold on, do you feel that? That's the wind of change blowing, and change had beans for lunch. Golf, and golf games, are cool now! But with EA's Tiger Woods lodged firmly at the top of the leaderboard, can Links 2004 compete?

It certainly out-drives Tiger in terms of visuals. The nine courses are all presented in such jaw-dropping beauty that we almost forgot we were stuck inside the darkened CVG games dungeon. The player models are fantastic, too, although the only pros included are Sergio Garcia, Mike Weir and Anneka Sorensen.

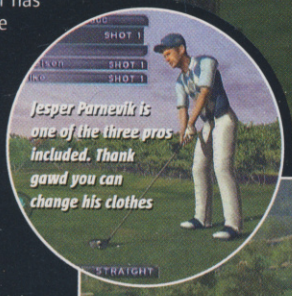

An effective short game requires gentle bum-tickling swings of the analogue stick

Where they differ is that Tiger has more control over his approach shots. Links' analogue stick-swing feels too easy, like thumping balls through the back fence on your first visit to the driving range. It lacks the finesse and skill required by Tiger Woods.

But every golfer has his big gun, the club he can always rely on to produce the goods. For Links it's the online modes made possible by XSN, which means you can play golfers all around the world. On the downside, the bummer is that you can't design your own player from scratch, which is crappier than a stray dog's bumhole.

It's a bit weird that Tiger Woods, with all its daft characters and stoopid cutscenes, nails the subtlety of golf better than this. Still, XSN support and some great presentation mean Links is also shooting off scratch.

The weather effects look cool and have a distinct effect on the playing surface

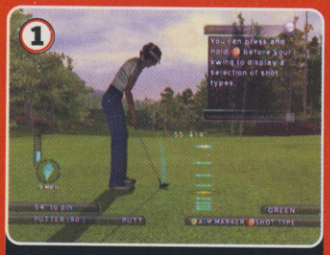

Jesper Parnevik is one of the three pros included. Thank gawd you can change his clothes

Hit it hard, melt your drive down the fairway and it'll fizz past the camera in cool bullet-time!

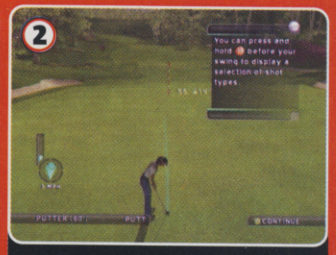
## I LIKE BIG PUTTS

**When you play a real round of golf a you get a caddy (Nick Faldo used to have one called Fanny, ho ho) who does all the hard work while you ponce about chatting up girls in the crowd.**

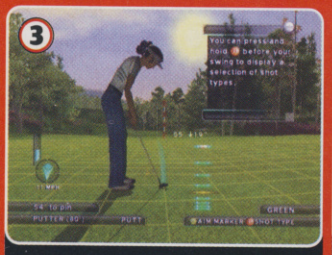
And just like Faldo's Fanny, Links 2004 will give you all the info you need about the course, the holes and what clubs to use, leaving you free to ponce about to your heart's content...



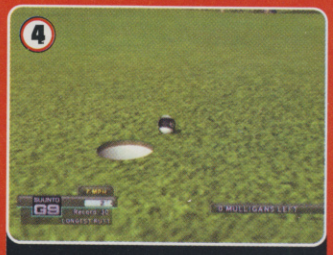
Don't be intimidated by big putts like this - Links gives you all the weapons you need...



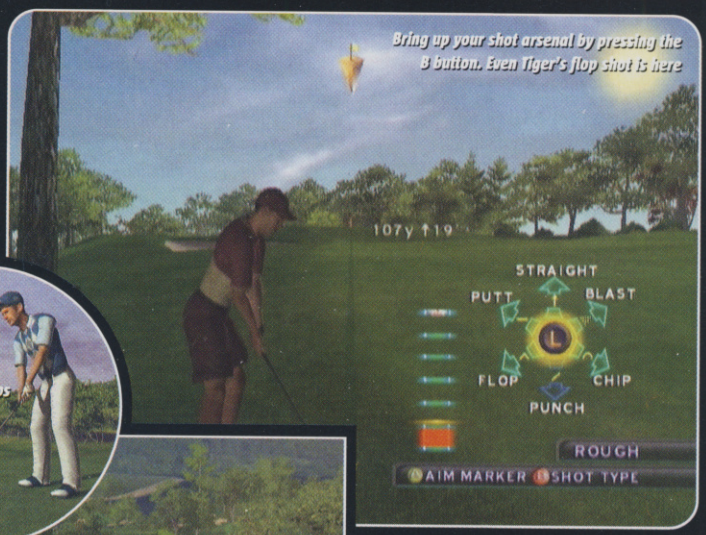
Like an aerial view and a guideline that shortens as your skills improve...



And a grid shows the lie. It's all stuff you'd look at if you were playing real golf



With a bit of skill, this all gives you a fair chance of sinking the putt. Get in!



Bring up your shot arsenal by pressing the B button. Even Tiger's flop shot is here

## GAMES VERDICT

Simple to play, just as beautiful as the real-life courses and with enough online modes to stop you ever setting a spiky shoe on them. If you're on Live, this is top of the leaderboard. **Graeme**

- Lush photo-realistic courses
- Loads of challenges and unlockables
- Superb XSN online support
- Shocking lack of character customisation
- Controls are a bit too simple
- Come on, golf's still a bit dull...

**8 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Tiger Woods 2004 (XB, PS2, PC)

# SPELLFORCE: THE ORDER OF DAWN

## IT'S GOT MAGIC AND MONSTERS BUT NO EYE OF SAURON

Someone did call the Fire Brigade, right?

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOVEMBER 28 COST: £34.99 PLAYERS: 1-8

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: JOWOOD DEV: PHENOMIC
WWW.SPELLFORCE.JOWOOD.COM

REVIEWED ON PC CD ROM

**Think Lord Of The Rings meets a cheesy amateur dramatics society and you'll get an idea of what to expect from this role-playing/real-time strategy hybrid. Set in one of those mythical worlds where war always seems to be brewing between man and the forces of evil, you play a powerful Rune Warrior tasked with bringing peace to the land.**

The script and acting are straight out of the bottom drawer, with lines often delivered with less conviction than an Australian soap. Thankfully, gameplay is more impressive. It's a mix of RPG-style character development and real-time strategy, although you'll be hard pressed to find much strategy in what is ultimately a very basic game. Select your troops en masse and send 'em into battle. That's it.

### SIMPLE AND SWEET?

A cack-handed interface doesn't help the game much either, but if you're looking for simple strategy fun, SpellForce delivers both in terms of action (battles get increasingly more epic and are truly spectacular to watch) and variety, with a wealth of sub-quests offering fun diversions from the main storyline.

If you can put up with acting which is more wooden than Pinocchio with a semi, and want a simple but entertaining strategy game to help pass the long winter nights, then SpellForce may be your vial of poison. But if you're looking for a bit of a challenge from your RPG/RTS games, then give Warcraft III a whirl instead.

Coo, look at the pretty graphics. Zoom into the action and get ready to be impressed

### REAL-TIME, ROLE-PLAYING, WUH?

**Unlike the majority of real-time strategy games, SpellForce has some great role-playing elements, which allow your Rune Warrior to gain experience and level up.**

You can then allocate these experience points to a vast array of combat and magical abilities and mould your trusty warrior into any kind of vicious warrior you desire.

Allocate experience points to the attributes you want your character to excel in. Mmm, could do with a bit more Charisma...

If you're planning to roast a goblin, make sure you kill it first. Because they're like cockroaches, they are...

Funny-looking swimming pool, the water's all vertical. Try and explain that in your Physics GCSE

Sub-quests add to the longevity of each level. Some of 'em go on a bit, though

Not a bad-looking girl, but she'd have to change her name before we'd date her

"It's only a little spider!" Imagine how many spider babies will come out of its belly though

"Come on, give us a hug as the sun sets all romantic, like." Another goblin wanting a snog

### computer and video games VERDICT

A fairly entertaining mongrel of gaming styles, despite the simplistic gameplay and fiddly interface. It's long too, though you might not want to play through to the end... **Martin**

- Nice visuals when you zoom into the action
- RPG and RTS elements in one game
- It's a bit like Lord Of The Rings

- Overly simplistic
- Horrendous voice acting
- Unwieldy interface

**6** OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Warcraft III (PC) Dungeon Siege (PC)

# TERMINATOR 3
## RISE OF THE MACHINES™

### SMACK MY BITCH UP

**As well as the first-person missions, T3 also sees you using your fists to beat the crap out of that hot chick from the movie, the hard-bodied T-X.**

The game switches to a third-person view, and Arnie can pull off a limited range of shite throws, punches and kicks. Like, big deal.

Arnie can kick better than Jonny Wilkinson

T-X's eye gouge is electrifying. Have some!

As fights rage, T-850's exo-skeleton crumbles

Human grunts help you in the futuristic battle levels

If you want heavy metal, stick to listening to Marilyn Manson

Rescue John Connor from... a birdcage? On second thoughts, keep that sap banged up

Arnie's arsenal is so big he has trouble finding trousers that fit

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: ATARI DEV: BLACKOPS ENTERTAINMENT
WWW.T3GAME.COM

REVIEWED ON XBOX

### CLEVER ONE-LINERS CAN'T MASK THE STINK OF THIS LAME ACTIONER

**Machines get a rough deal. We use and abuse them, then chuck 'em out when something better comes along. A toilet that wipes your arse for you? See ya later, cruddy bog.**

So it's no wonder they're fighting back, and we're not talking about revolting loos. Instead it's Arnie's metalhead pals that want to cook our butts, in this first-person blaster that's based loosely on the explosive Hollywood action movie.

#### SHORT CIRCUIT

Those expecting a beefy shooter will be left gutted – fact is there's more meat on Arnie's little finger than there is in this by-the-numbers gun game. Even on the toughest difficulty you'll breeze through the first few missions, and the endless supply of health packs and Arnie's fat arsenal means it's unlikely you'll blow a circuit in the first half hour, let alone lose a life.

This wouldn't be such a big deal if your ass-capping skills were challenged as the game progressed, but the difficulty curve is flatter than Tara Palmer-Tomkinson's chest, from the very beginning right to the end. Aside from a few sticky moments (not with TPT, sadly), Arnie shakes off an entire cyborg army without breaking sweat... well, er, oil.

And playing it on the hardest difficulty only makes the game's flaws all the more frustrating, like the flaky auto lock-on and limited fist-fighting moves. Rubbish.

It's a shame, because the basics are pretty solid: the controls are easy to pick up and precise, and the action is relentless – everything a good action game should be.

But it looks *so* dull, to the point where you almost feel depressed after wading through the first few levels. And, like we said before, it'll never challenge you, even if you're the sap whose mates take the piss out of because you're rubbish at games. "I'll be back"? We hope not.

Disable human enemies rather than kill them, using arse gas

The T-900. Scary-looking buggers, aren't they? Shame they're so easy to kill

Unlockable extras include glossy movie stills

### GAMES VERDICT

Another thoughtless movie tie-in. Terminator looks dull, is too short and doesn't offer anything that first-person shooters didn't do three years ago. Hasta la vista, Arnie. **Stephen**

- A fat load of weapons to play around with
- It actually plays reasonably well
- Too easy on medium difficulty, frustrating on high, and goddamn short too!
- Auto-lock rarely targets the enemy you want
- Graphics don't do the Xbox justice

**4 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS, TRY THIS... Fire Warrior (PS2, PC) Dredd Vs. Death (All)

# COUNTER STRIKE

## THE ULTIMATE ONLINE SHOOTER REPACKAGED FOR XBOX LIVE

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-16
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: MICROSOFT DEV: RITUAL
WWW.COUNTER-STRIKE.NET
REVIEWED ON: XBOX

**You can't say Counter-Strike is retro just yet, but it has been around a long old while. The original Half-Life mod that damn near blew the competition clean off the map infiltrated the PC online scene back in 2000. It became the greatest multiplayer FPS on the planet – even better, you downloaded it for zilch if you already owned Half-Life.**

So if the best things in life can come free, why be thrilled to pay for Counter-Strike on Xbox? Its credibility in the online arena may be bulletproof, but its strength as a singleplayer ruckus is more in the way of economy loo roll.

### LIVE AND KICKING

The game structure is simple, but brilliant: you play as terrorists or counter-terrorists in teams of up to eight. Terrorists plant bombs and make sure the coast is clear for it to blow. Counter-terrorists must prevent the explosion. Both work as teams, so communication is essential. Instructions can be spoken, but you've the option to use 'key commands' and that's also the only way to command AI buddies.

An Xbox with Live is a solid online platform for CS. Everyone has the same set-up, and nobody can cheat like some crap-heads are doing on PC either. CS for Xbox is also set up for content download, meaning more professional-quality maps on the way in addition to those from the recent PC update of CS: Condition Zero.

If you play regularly with the same guys you'll grow better as a team, and you'll be hooked. What's missing is any kind of plot-based campaign – what you play solo is the same as multiplayer, only with bots instead of blokes to back you up or blow you up. The one-player ain't fun, basically.

### SHOP UNTIL YOU DROP... DEAD

**Aside from running, shooting and hiding, Counter-Strike scrapes together a campaign-type feel with its weapons management system.** You'll value every bullet in the clip when you're saving cash for heavier firepower.

*Resist the urge to be all gung-ho and charge in there screaming, wasting ammo*

*Clue: your strategy sucks if you're left holding nothing but a knife!*

*If you know where someone is hiding, sneak up behind and treat them to a surprise*

*Character models are basic, though texture detail is improved over the PC version*

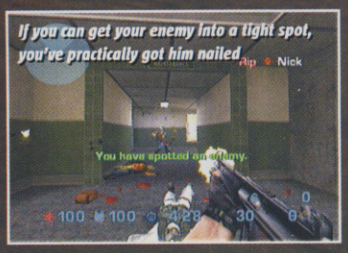
*Fight in numbers if you're not so sure of yourself to begin with. Extra firepower helps*

*Once you've set the timer get the hell out of there, or you'll go up with the bomb*

*This interface is new for Xbox and very user-friendly. We like a bit of easy interaction*

*Dust and Dust 2 are the most popular levels in Counter-Strike – ask anyone*

*While your buddies distract the enemy, move in and finish the job*




*If you can get your enemy into a tight spot, you've practically got him nailed*

### computer and video GAMES VERDICT

A classic online FPS for Xbox, with tight as a rat's ass level design, and no-nonsense kill or get killed strategising. If you don't have Xbox Live though, forget it. **Paul**

- Working as a team
- Great Live support
- Class level design

- Minimal presentation
- No decent singleplayer missions
- Crappy graphics for Xbox

**7 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Warcraft III (PC) Dungeon Siege (PC)



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thesims.uk.ea.com

# Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone™

We're not sure older boys Fred and George should be showing Harry this yet...

GAME INFO | OUT: NOW | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: EA | DEV: EA | WWW.UK.EA.COM | REVIEWED ON: PS2 | ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX, CUBE

Find and raid the treasure chests for Wizard Cards and other treats

## ONE SQUEEZE OF THE UDDER TOO MANY FOR EA'S LUCRATIVE POTTER LICENCE

**Looks like JK Rowling was having an off day when she approved this remake of the very first Happy Potter videogame. Although there's little to fault in the way of Potter authenticity – the characters look and sound right, and the game takes the tried-and-tested route of following the plot ruthlessly – as a game, Philosopher's Stone is about as much fun as eating a poo-tasting Every Flavour Bean.**

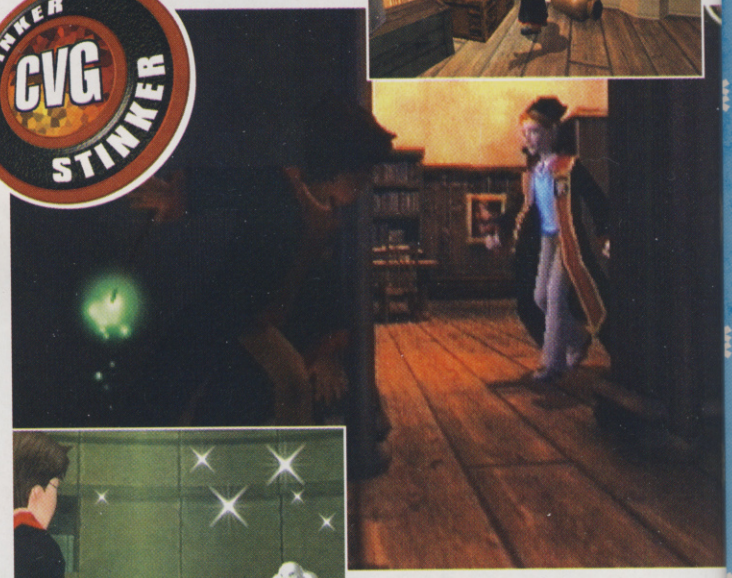
### HALF-ARSED HOGWARTS

Running around Hogwarts is a curiously flat experience, and not helped by the chronically jerky frame rate. There's none of the mysterious ambience or magical atmosphere seen in other Potter games and movies, so running from lessons to mini-quests is boring. Wizard school should be better than this.

Controlling Harry is lame as well. He runs too fast to make exploring the boxy levels any fun. What sort of child wizard genius repeatedly smacks himself into bookcases and walls because he can't slow down in time? The camera and lock-on targeting are so inept you end up getting trounced by even the weakest goblins and boggarts, never mind Lord Voldemort.

Most infuriating of all though is the fact that Harry jumps automatically when presented with chasms to cross and objects to scale, but the game isn't intelligent enough to prevent Harry from attempting a leap he can't physically make. Falling to your doom in the naff platform sections and having to restart over and over again is about as far removed from the Potter magic as you can get.

STINKER CVG STINKER



Avoid prefects or you have to restart that section all over again... Gah!

You can only call on Hedwig at key points as a device to solve simple puzzles

Idiotic gameplay guarantees your newest spell is the one to use against new enemies

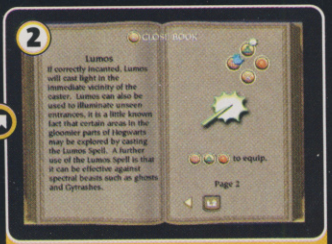
Use the lumos spell to reveal traps and secret routes away from the pain

## WHEN GOOD IDEAS TURN BAD

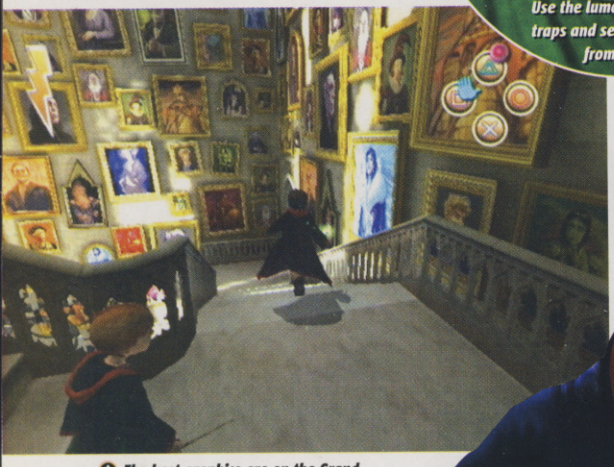
**On paper, this remake has all the right ingredients for an amazing adventure. With the licence comes an amazing story, a cool setting, all manner of collectibles and secrets to find, amazing enemies to battle and a magical world – right out of the box.**

Sadly all of this has been squandered on a barely average action title that trips over its own wand and ends up turning itself into a steaming pile of Hippogriff dung.

Press select to call up Harry's Remembrall, a bit like the stats screens in Zelda




There are at least loads of books to collect and learn from in the game



The best graphics are on the Grand Staircase. The rest is pretty shoddy

### computer and video games VERDICT

An uninspired and poorly made action game that's an insult to Potter fans and videogamers alike. This totally misses the point of what a good Potter game should be about. **Lee**

- Explore first book-era Hogwarts in hi-res
- It's another Potter fix at the very least
- Lifeless and lacking in atmosphere
- Controls make playing the game horrible
- Lack of pace and poor structure makes it feel really disjointed

**4 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... Chamber Of Secrets (PS2, XB, GC)

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MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH

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PLUS 68 HOTTEST GAMES OF 2004

WWE SMACKDOWN HERE COMES THE PAIN

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2

MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH

# ESPN BASKETBALL

GAME INFO | OUT: NOW | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-4 | REVIEWED ON: PS2

PUB: SEGA * DEV: SEGA
WWW.ESPNVIDEOGAMES.COM/NBA

## MAKE SURE YOUR RIGHT THUMB'S AT MATCH FITNESS, COS IT'S GONNA TAKE A POUNDING

**Neglected, the outsider, a waste of space! The right analogue stick on PS2's Dual Shock controller has seen little action over the past few years, other than in first-person shooters. But recently the wee plastic nubbin has shot to fame with the likes of Pro Evo 3 using it as the trigger for all its fanciest tricks.**

Sega's new b-baller has seen what our right thumb is capable of, and makes sure that you have a blister the size of a button mushroom by the time the shot clock runs out. But luckily you're rewarded with pleasures for all of your pain

### STICK IT TO 'EM

Now with a few instinctive flicks of the right stick you can perform dazzling offensive high-jinks, and clever defensive manoeuvres.

ESPN NBA Basketball is firmly rooted in the world of sports simulation and this elegantly simple, rewarding and snappy feature adds even more depth to your game. Plus as the moves come so naturally, you're never left hanging as you try to work out complex button combos. This keeps the action flowing at breakneck pace and makes for more energised hoop-sinking action.

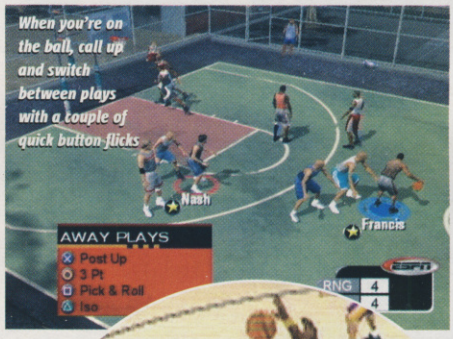
### PLAYING TO THE CROWD

All these natty new moves are accompanied by swish player animations that blend together brilliantly. There are occasional collision glitches, which occur when things get too crazy, but on the whole, this is possibly the most dapper-looking basketball game in the hood. The player likenesses are spot on, and with bang up-to-date official team rosters hardcore ballers will find little to bitch about.

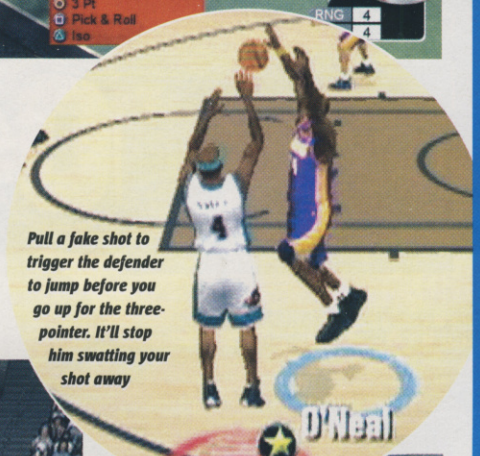
Wrap it all up with bags of engrossing in-depth play modes, ranging from full career options to two-on-two street court quickies and you've got one of the most appealing b-ball packages available for PS2.

The free throw mechanism feels wicked, though it's tough to sink single-pointers

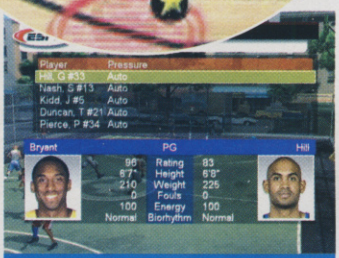
You can back into a defender and shield the ball from their wandering hands. Ha!




When you're on the ball, call up and switch between plays with a couple of quick button flicks



Pull a fake shot to trigger the defender to jump before you go up for the three-pointer. It'll stop him swatting your shot away




It's not all just fast action. Take time to plan specific strategies against stiff opposition

There are dozens of dunk animations and special moves

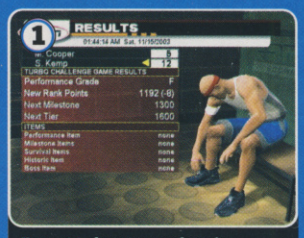
Kobe Bryant: Sega's nailed the player likenesses this time

## NO TIMEOUTS

**Create-a-player has been done to death, so it's good that ESPN's new 24/7 mode shakes things up. But it does this in a more innovative way than just piling on customisation options.**

Instead, it focuses on making you train a player, and enter them into one-on-one contests in real-time. What makes it so cool is that everything is synchronised with your PS2's internal clock. So if you work on increasing your player's stats and don't keep training him up at regular intervals throughout the week, his fitness starts to decrease. And since your guy is utterly rubbish at first, you won't want to let any of your hard work go to waste.

It's compulsive, and you'll need heaps of dedication if you're going to push your man up the ranking ladder and to superstar status.

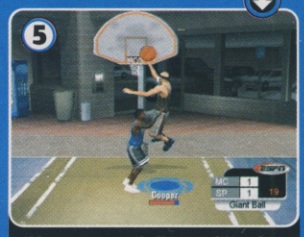



You get to boost your player's attributes in every athletic outing

Visit loads of real-life basketball hotspots across the US

Work on each part of your game on the training court to beef up your skills

Unlike the Xbox version you can't take your character online




This one-on-one challenge with a giant ball really tests your accuracy

## GAMES VERDICT

If you can tear yourself away from footie, Sega's big league b-baller sinks a winner with its blistering blend of furious action, flashy moves and exciting in-depth play modes. **Mike**

- Instinctive fast-paced courtside action
- Bursting with options for b-ball tacticians
- Addictive and original 24/7 mode

- Occasional animation hiccups
- Lack of online options
- Basketball is a crap American sport anyway

**8 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS... NBA Live 2004 (PS2, XB)

# ESPN NHL HOCKEY

## CONTENDER FOR MOST INITIALS IN A GAME TITLE *AND* PLAYS A MEAN GAME OF HOCKEY

*Hell yeah! What's ice hockey without a scrap? The fighting's a bit mince though*

*Fancy-pants television replays accompany important moments, like this awesome save*

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOVEMBER 28 COST: £29.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
PUB: SEGA DEV: VISUAL CONCEPTS
WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM
ONLINE GAMING
REVIEWED ON: PS2
ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

There's a bit of a divide over American sports at CVG. Some of us think they're daft games played by big jessies in shoulder pads, and others can't get enough of the non-stop action, the over-the-top attitude and theatrical presentation.

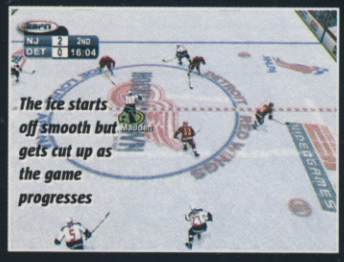
Which basically sums up ESPN NHL: a fast and action-packed game of ice hockey, which is stuffed so full of entertaining nonsense it's obese. A bit like the average ice hockey fan.

*Big shoulder hits send opponents tumbling. Puckin' hell! Come on, you knew we had to...*

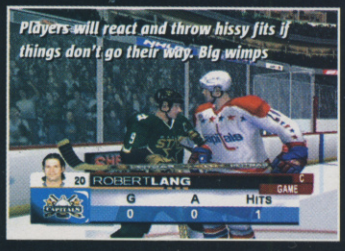
### FAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

And they get obese because they sit and watch ESPN, America's answer to Sky Sports. We can't blame them, because everything's presented with such polish that we ended up sitting on our arses eating foot-long hot dogs and drinking buckets of Coke with a burger floating on top.

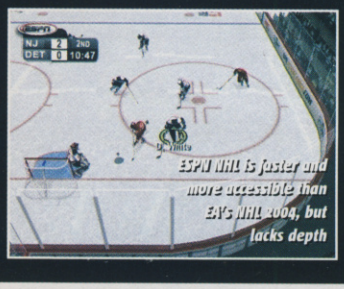
The commentary in particular is scarily good, which makes us even angrier that Konami hasn't fixed the half-arsed gabbing in Pro Evo. It's good, exciting stuff. It's not going to take over our lunch hour, but then it's just not football, is it? CVG




*The ice starts off smooth but gets cut up as the game progresses*




*Players will react and throw hissy fits if things don't go their way. Big wimps*




*ESPN NHL is faster and more accessible than EA's NHL 2004, but lacks depth*

**computer and video games VERDICT**

Fast and hard-hitting, like a 15-stone hockey defender slamming you into the boards. Easier to get into than EA's NHL games and the cool TV-style presentation is mint. **Graeme**

- Swish presentation and amazing commentary
- Fast and fun
- Easy to understand for novices

- Player models could be sharper
- Lacks a strategic edge
- Icy whiteness hurts our eyeballs!

**7 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... NHL Hockey 2004 (PS2, XB, GC, PC)

# ESPN NFL FOOTBALL

## SEGA SCORES WITH MEN IN TIGHTS AND STRANGE-SHAPED BALLS

**GAME INFO** OUT: NOVEMBER 28 COST: £29.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
PUB: SEGA DEV: VISUAL CONCEPTS
WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM
ONLINE GAMING
REVIEWED ON: PS2
ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

People are always talking about how American football players are big fannies because they wear loads of padding. Thing is, put those people in front of a snarling 20-stone lump of steel muscle and they'd mess their un-padded pants real quick.

Or you could sit them down in front of ESPN NFL. In a bizarre game mode you can play in the first-person, peering through your helmet at the mentalists about to disconnect your spinal cord. Cool!

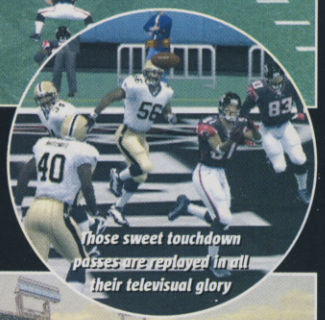
The Standard mode's pretty sweet too. All the teams, players and game modes you'd expect are here, and there's even a cool Crib mode where you can pad out your home with unlockable extras.

Like The Sims but with more testosterone, and probably less taste.

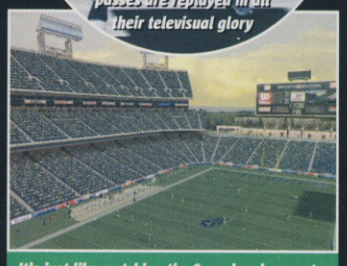
If you're a complete stranger to the sport you'll still find it all as confusing as a 100,000 piece jigsaw of a rubbish dump, but it's more streamlined than EA's Madden series. Add in the ESPN branding and you get the best NFL experience to be found short of flying to the States and cheering along with all the other pot-bellied nutters. CVG

*The TV presentation is superb and the commentary, like ESPN NHL, is spot on*

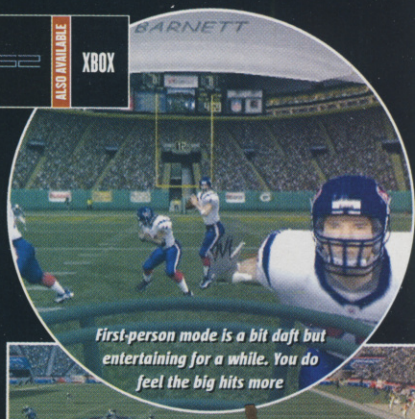
*You can change your play at the last moment by calling an audible*



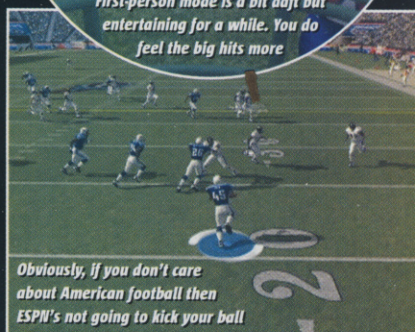
*Those sweet touchdown passes are replayed in all their televisual glory*



*It's just like watching the Superbowl, except you don't have to stay up until 5am*




*First-person mode is a bit daft but entertaining for a while. You do feel the big hits more*



*Obviously, if you don't care about American football then ESPN's not going to kick your ball*

**computer and video games VERDICT**

American football with an arcadey edge. Encourages quick, run-and- gun action that's fun enough to convert cynical US sport haters and rewarding enough for fans. **Graeme**

- Wicked ESPN branding
- Instant, fast-flowing action
- Heaps of sweet novelties and extras

- Still confusing for novice
- Fewer moves and plays than Madden
- Not too much emphasis on strategy

**8 OUT OF TEN**

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Madden 2004 (PS2, XB, GC, PC)

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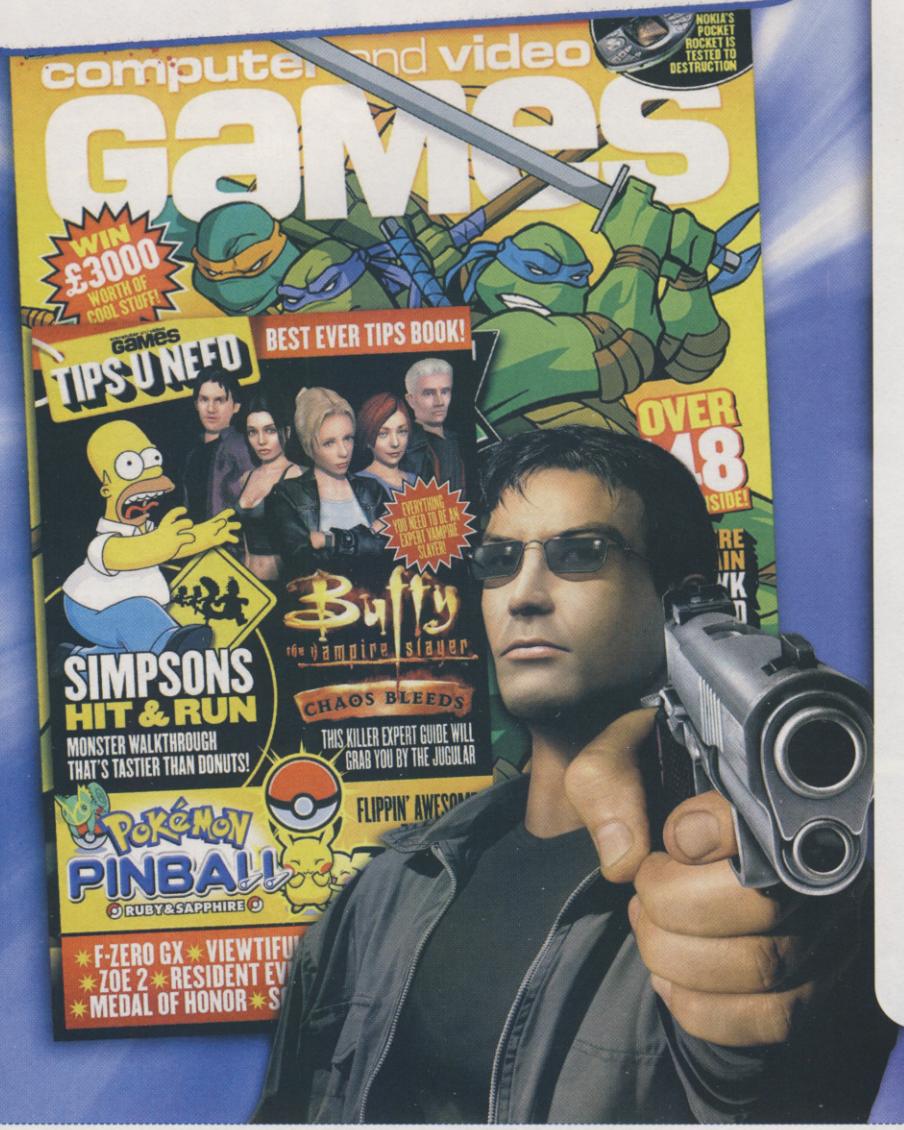


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PUT A ROCKET IN YOUR POCKET WITH CVG'S MASSIVE EXCLUSIVE!

*Contents subject to change without prior notice*

**PLUS!**

### FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR

Top secret new intel straight from the frontline... soon as we can evac our squad from the US. Don't miss it!

### FINAL FANTASY X-2

We've drunk enough Hi-Potions to make a grown man vom just to bring you the ultimate playtest

### POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

We playtest the first proper 3D adventure for the ickle monsties! Well, that's our Xmas ruined...

This PS2 shooter's so secret it hasn't even been announced yet. If we told you we'd have to kill you.

### SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW

Bollocks to other mags, we're the FIRST mag to play it. The truth is in here... next month

**PLUS!**

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**ISSUE 269 ON SALE THURSDAY 15TH JANUARY**

# TEXT TO WIN

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**'CVG ROLLING ABC'***

*CALLS COST NO MORE THAN 50P

## £1500 OF PHAT GEAR TO WIN!

You don't need to know your Jon Julio from your Cesar Mora or your Boardwalk from your Crosswalk to see that this pile of rollerblading goodness has it all – the killer clothes to look street while you skate, the smartest skates for the phattest air, a wick portable sound system for setting your feet on fire... and all the home entertainment you'll need while your broken leg mends. That'll learn ya for posing instead of watching where you're rolling!

To celebrate the release of PS2 and Xbox inline skater Rolling, we've teamed up with SCi Entertainment to offer a phat fifteen hundred squid's worth of gear, so get entering. Cesar, we who are about to fly salute you...

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## OKAY, TO ENTER THIS COMPETITION YOU NEED TO PROVE YOU CAN ROLL WITH THE BEST

**QUESTION 1. Only one of these pictures is the real deal. Which?**

- A: .....screenshot 1
- B: .....screenshot 2
- C: .....screenshot 3

**Give us a clue!?**

**CVG: Skaters are always ready for their close up. CLOSE UP, right?!**

**QUESTION 2. Legendary pro skater Jon Julio's nickname is:**

- A: .....The Head
- B: .....The Legs
- C: .....The Don

**Give us a clue!?**

**CVG: If you used this to skate it would hurt. A lot.**

## ROLLING IN IT!

**Well, you will be if you win CVG's cooler-than-ice Rolling compo. We've teamed up with those nice fellas over at SCi to offer you the chance to win a bundle – a skate bundle, that is. Besides an Xbox and copies of SCi's blockbusting inline skate 'em up, and a smart Movo MP3 player and GD580 dolby Digital / DTS 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers from Creative Labs (check 'em out on www.europe.creative.com), we've got so much big label skate gear and clothes for you to snaffle that you'd think we'd knocked over a designer warehouse (no, officer, we WERE given it all, honest). Just tick your answers in the coupon over the road, whap it in the post marked CVG Rolling Compo to the right address and way-hay, you're rolling.**

# Rolling

## BLOODY WELL CUT IT OUT, WILL YA!

**So you think you know the answers to the questions do you? Smart guy, huh? Well don't get cocky, your work here is nowhere near done...** Now you've got to fill in this coupon, hoping against hope that we draw your entry out of the editor's pants on Wednesday 14 January, 2004. It could be you, as they say on the lottery. Except on the lottery it never is you, and in CVG it sometimes is...

**QUESTION 1**
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐

**QUESTION 1**
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐

Rolling

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Send to: CVG Rolling Compo, CVG Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 9 Dallington Street, London EC1V 0BQ

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☐ Please tick here if you do not wish to receive occasional emails about carefully chosen products or services from companies other than Dennis Publishing Ltd
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**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Only entries with all of the questions completed correctly and received before **Wednesday 14 January 2004** will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post, so don't phone. No cash alternatives. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final. And when it comes to deciding, nobody decides like 'Decisive Al'. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply.

***EXTRA TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR 'TEXT TO WIN':** The service is available to Vodaphone, Orange, BT Cellnet (O2), and One2One (T-Mobile) customers. It will not cost more than 50p (incl. VAT) for each entry. The user will receive one confirmation message per entry. The service is provided by Inspired Technology Group in conjunction with CVG. If users have any problems, they should call +353 1 667 855 (9am-6pm) or email support@poptext.com

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### 4X4 EVOLUTION 2 — PS2

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **BAM!**
Skanky visuals and floaty handling stop this off-road racer from delivering the goods. Delivering the bads, more like

### ACE GOLF — GC

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Amusing golf game with seven 18-hole courses, plus the addition of insane power-ups. We like

### ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING — GBA

■ CVG Score: **9** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Pocket-sized turn-based strategy boasting superior AI and an addictive challenge. Incredibly similar to the original, but still mint

### AERO THE ACROBAT — GBA

■ CVG Score: **5** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Zoo Digital**
Age-old circus-themed platformer that utterly fails to threaten Mario's Game Boy Advance antics

### ALTER ECHO — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Colourful action-adventure sees you blasting hordes of alien scum while wearing an evolving (that's 'evolving', not 'revolving') bio-suit

### AMPED 2 — XBOX

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-8** ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
The best-looking boarder, massive replay value and great online features, you'll love it and that's a CVG cast-iron promise

### AMPLITUDE — PS2

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Big rib-hurting belly laughs aplenty, in this rhythm-action game that allows you to make music with your friends

### APE ESCAPE 2 — PS2

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Chase an army of pant-wearing simians in this comedy platformer full of gags and ideas

### ARMORED CORE 3 — PS2

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Metro 3D**
A mech battler with limited appeal – making your robot is very hardcore, the rest is dull

### ARX FATALIS — XBOX

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Dreamcatcher**
An enormous RPG adventure with lots of freedom and a great story, shame it looks so goddam murky

### ATV OFF ROAD FURY 2 — PS2 XBOX GBA

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Decent arcade racer that is let down by being too simple, short and lacking depth. So, er, not that decent really...

### ATV: QUAD POWER RACING 2 — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
The physics feel real and the races are very demanding. This one's the current king of the quads

### AUTO MODELLISTA — PS2

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Serious racer dressed up in funky graphics. It's good, but Gran Turismo's got nothing to worry about

### BACKYARD WRESTLING — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **5** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Action-filled no-holds-barred wrestling let down by shabby controls and candy-ass gameplay

### BANJO-KAZOOIE: GRUNTY'S REVENGE — GBA

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **THQ**
An absorbing mix of platforms, puzzles and mini-games, one of the GBA's best original games

### BARBARIAN — PS2 XBOX GC

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Virgin Interactive**
As Simon Cowell would say, a 'distinctly average' fighter that lacks imagination and plays even worse against friends than alone

### BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Futuristic arcade shooter that's more flight sim than Halo and looks a treat at all times

### BATTLEFIELD 1942: ROAD TO ROME — PC

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-64** ■ Publisher: **EA**
Expansion disc adding new weapons and multiplayer modes, essential if you're a fan

### BEYBLADE — PC

■ CVG Score: **2** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Atari**
Even if you love the cartoon do yourself a favour and avoid! One of the worst games ever made

### BEYOND GOOD & EVIL — PS2

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Great gameplay that's full of surprises mixing nearly every style of game into a cracking adventure

### BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Empire Interactive**
Like Crazy Taxi but in a big rig. Doesn't look great and the journeys quickly get dull

### BIG STRIKE BOWLING — PC

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1-6** ■ Publisher: **Take 2**
Simplistic bowling action for the PSone, could be good for a few hours with friends, but that's about yer lot

### BILLY HATCHER AND THE GIANT EGG — GC

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Sega**
Roll eggs around in this quirky platformer which is eventually let down by getting repetitive. Getting repetitive. Getting repetitive...

### BLACKSTONE: MAGIC & STEEL — XBOX

■ CVG Score: **5** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Xicat**
Venture through monster-infested dungeons in this lacklustre PC conversion that lacks excitement

### BLOOD OMEN 2 — PS2 XBOX GC

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
More solid Legacy Of Kain action, but here the controls make the experience less enjoyable than Soul Reaver 2

### BLOODRAYNE — XBOX

■ CVG Score: **5** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
A vampire battles zombies in this dull and repetitive beat 'em up that suffers from a sluggish control system

### BOMBASTIC — PS2

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
The golden rule is that all puzzle games should be easy to pick up. Well, Bombastic breaks that golden rule. It's average as a result

### BREATH OF FIRE IV — PC

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
When it first appeared on the SNES this was a stunning RPG, but this PC port is lame and dated

### BREATH OF FIRE: DRAGON QUARTER — PS2

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Frustrating RPG with save points way too far apart. More suspicious minds than ours might say that's deliberate to hide the short length

### BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON — PS2 XBOX PC

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Slow-paced puzzle solving that's beefed up with a good plot and set pieces but is still too easy

### BRUTE FORCE — XBOX

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-8** ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Impressive-looking co-operative squad-based shooter let down by lame characters and poor AI

### BUBBLE BOBBLE OLD AND NEW — GBA

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Empire Interactive**
Vintage puzzle action that is perfectly suited to the GBA, includes both retro and updated versions

### BUFFY: CHAOS BLEEDS — PS2 XBOX GC

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-4** ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Perfectly suited to Buffy fans suffering withdrawal symptoms, full of vampire-busting action and humour

### BUFFY: RETURN OF THE DARKHUL — GBA

■ CVG Score: **6** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Competent though unspectacular side-scrolling beat 'em up action, but doesn't offer anything exciting

### BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT — PS2 XBOX

■ CVG Score: **8** ■ Players: **1-2** ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
The fastest racer available on any console. Drive through oncoming traffic with incredibly long courses and spectacular crashes

### C.S.I. — PC

■ CVG Score: **7** ■ Players: **1** ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Captures the spirit and procedure of the TV show, although with only five cases to solve it's over too soon

### CALL OF DUTY
PC
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
All the elusive waiting for PC heavyweights is fruitless when a game like Call Of Duty can appear from nowhere and trash the opposition

### CASTLEVANIA: ARIA OF SORROW
GBA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Another solid entry in the GBA series – explore and battle in every nook of Dracula's castle. Great stuff

### CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 2002/2003
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
For the first time on a console, the full Champ Man experience, absorbing and addictive as ever

### CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 4
PC
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
The best football management sim on the market, now boasting a match engine that adds to the experience

### CHAOS LEGION
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Stunning hack 'n' slash action featuring a huge sword and thousands of enemies to defeat. Simple yet still fun

### CHARLIE'S ANGELS
PS2 GC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **UbiSoft**
Weak tie-in with the Full Throttle movie. Shoddy, simplistic fighting and nobby graphics are the order of the day

### CHOPLIFTER: CRISIS SHIELD
GBA PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Xicat**
Search and rescue for missing soldiers and pilots. A lack of variety and shonky visuals let the classic title down

### CLOCK TOWER 3
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
The best entry in the survival horror series so far, although still not a patch on Resident Evil or Silent Hill

### CLUB FOOTBALL
PS2 XBOX
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
Average football title that makes poor use of official club licences and is kicked off the park by the football heavyweights

### COLIN McRAE RALLY 04
PS2
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
Best entry in the series so far, full of gameplay improvements that make the rally action feel sweeter than ever

### COMMAND & CONQUER: GENERALS
PC
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Solid entry in the C&C series, now with 3D units and buildings, the classic gameplay has never felt better

### COMMANDOS 3
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Every bit as crushingly difficult as the previous games, now with the addition of eight-way multiplayer

### CONFLICT: DESERT STORM
GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **SCI**
Belated but updated Cube version of a great team-based shooter that boasts 15 lengthy missions and multiple ways to solve problems

### CONFLICT: DESERT STORM 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **SCI**
Improved sequel that boasts better enemy AI, stealth and a new two-player co-operative feature

### CONTRA ADVANCE: THE ALIEN WARS EX
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Classic SNES side-scrolling shooter is revamped in style for the GBA – they don't get much tougher than this

### CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
The classic side-scrolling gameplay remains, although the graphics are now 3D. A solid arcade experience

### COUNTER-STRIKE: CONDITION ZERO
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Disappointing singleplayer version of the online shooter, with tacky puzzles and poor AI, redeemed by online content

### CRASH NITRO KART
PS2 XBOX GC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Big, brash and bright with more modes than Mario Double Dash!! but doesn't match the magic

### CRIMSON SEA
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Koei Europe**
Fun and enjoyable blaster with thousands of enemies, a variety of challenges and spectacular special effects

### CRIMSON SKIES
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
For anyone into airborne adventures this is brilliant fun with ace multiplayer modes

### DAKAR 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Dull racer that never gets out of first gear, while bland courses and twitchy controls make this one to avoid

### DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Buy a dance mat and this party game becomes a musical version of Twister. Solid stuff that'll get you on your feet

### DANCING STAGE PARTY EDITION
PS2
**PS2** ■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
The PSone visuals don't stop this from being another hit in the Dancing Stage series, although Megamix beats it

### DAREDEVIL
GBA
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Battle an endless parade of enemies in this repetitive side-scrolling affair. Plenty of secrets but still average

### DARK CHRONICLE
PS2
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Currently the best RPG on the PS2, with an absorbing story, great graphics and imaginative gameplay

### DARK FALL: THE JOURNAL
PC
■ Format: **PC** ■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Dreamcatcher**
A ghost story point-and-click adventure. It's hardly cutting edge, but a good example of the genre

### DEAD TO RIGHTS
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Compelling action-adventure, with simple but effective fight moves and plenty of good ideas

### DEF JAM VENDETTA
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Wrestling meets rap in this competent fighter that boasts a great engine and larger-than-life characters

### DEFENDER
PS2 XBOX GC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Update of the classic shooter, now in 3D but the core gameplay remains. Good, but too short and simplistic

### DELTA FORCE: BLACK HAWK DOWN
PC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Novalogic**
Great film, but the game is lame, with poor squad AI and cannon fodder enemies adding to the cliché-filled woe

### DEVASTATION
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Novalogic**
Cyber-punk shooter with an Eminem lookalike in command. It has some good ideas but commanding troops is too tricky

### DEVIL MAY CRY 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
A second playable character can't save this sequel. The first DMC looked and played far better than this

### DIGIMON BATTLE SPIRIT
GBA
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
Cute mini-brawler similar in style to Smash Bros. Good fun, especially if you like Digimon

### DINO CRISIS 2
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Solid dino-battling adventure that looks and feels dated and out of place compared to PC heavyweights

### DINO CRISIS 3
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Dinosaurs in space is a brave idea and for the most part it works although the camera is a major letdown

### DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL
GC
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Novelty-filled arcade action that, while competent, doesn't offer the same thrill as the grown-up Pro Evo

### DISNEY'S ALADDIN
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Another SNES oldie is updated, with strong action full of humour and some new bonus stages

### DISNEY'S PARTY
GC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Mickey and his gang try to muscle in on Mario Party's patch and fail with unoriginal mini-games

### DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Impress the buxom ladies with volleyball and gift-buying skills. Be warned, it's a love-it-or-loathe-it experience

### DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Yet another golden oldie is converted to the GBA, but this time it doesn't look as good as the original

### DR MUTO
PS2 XBOX GC GBA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Inventive platformer that'll leave a big grin on your face with some wacky characters and humour

### DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Boasting more insane moves and abilities than most other fighters but let down by a lack of depth

### DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
A fast, adrenalin-drenched update of the insane fighter. Fans of the show will be creaming with delight

### DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: HEROES
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
More fun in co-operative play than alone, this is beardy but too arcadey for the D&D purists

### DYNASTY TACTICS 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Koei**
Expands on the original, but complicates with a far more expansive rule set. Hardcore but rewarding

### DYNASTY WARRIORS 4
PS2 XBOX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Koei**
Best version of the oriental hack 'n' slasher with a number of new gameplay features to please fans

### ENCLAVE
XBOX
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Swing!**
A Tolkien-esque adventure with great visuals and story, but is let down by poor combat and lack of multiplayer

### ENTER THE MATRIX
PS2 XBOX GC PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Exciting mix of game and exclusive live-action elements, but repetition and bland levels let it down slightly

### EVIL DEAD: A FIST FULL OF BOOMSTICK
PS2
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Mindless and unrewarding button-bashing monster masher that fails to live up to the licence

### EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING
PS2 XBOX PC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Unresponsive controls are the major disadvantage for this skater, even with the inclusion of Solid Snake

### EYETOY: GROOVE
PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Fun for a while but disappoints with its claustrophobic gameplay and limited track list

### F1 CAREER CHALLENGE
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Great racer and a novel twist as you compete in the 1999-2002 F1 seasons, complete with real events

### FIFA 2004
PS2 XBOX GC PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
A major improvement over recent entries with better passing and the addition of online play

### FINAL FANTASY TACTICS
GBA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Absorbing strategic battler that will appeal to RPG and Advance War fans. It's long-lasting, too

### FIRE BLADE
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Arcade-style shooter sees you piloting a military chopper into hotspots full of stuff to blow up

### FORD RACING 2
PS2 XBOX PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Empire**
The fun of Gran Turismo at a pocket-money price, many options and an impressive showroom of cars

### FORGOTTEN CONFLICT
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Cenega**
Fifteen missions similar to Commandos, but set in the Korean War and not as fist-eatingly harsh. Good, but hardly cutting-edge stuff

### FORMULA ONE 2003
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Improved rival AI and multiplayer modes but fails to offer anything excitingly new over its predecessor

### FREEDOM FIGHTERS
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Squad-based shooter that does away with fiddly commands and keeps everything simple and enjoyable

### FROGGER BEYOND
GC PS2
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Simplistic platformer that keeps the essentials of the Frogger brand, but won't hold your attention for long

### FURIOUS KARTING
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Looks like a realistic karting sim but boasts the addition of comedy weapons. It's not funny!

### FUTURAMA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **SCI**
Great cutscenes and jokes can't save this tie-in from being far too simplistic and undemanding

### F-ZERO GX
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
The most exciting arcade racer currently available on console. Gorgeous visuals and course design add to the fun

### GALERIANS: ASH
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sammy Europe**
Slow-paced action adventure that is redeemed by a strong storyline and cool cutscenes

### GALIDOR
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Absorb enemy powers in this Lego spin-off that is good but hampered by a steep learning curve

### GHOSTHUNTER
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **SCEE**
It'll glue you to your controller and scare you witless but sadly doesn't break any new ground

### GLADIATOR: SWORD OF VENGEANCE
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Button-bashing slash 'em up stuff that's done well but won't keep you occupied for long

### GLADIUS
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Turn-based strategy adventure with a wealth of combat options. Slow but rewarding

### GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Movie monsters battle across cities, limited singleplayer appeal but much better in multiplayer

### GOLDEN SUN: THE LOST AGE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Second chapter in the RPG series, a lengthy and engaging quest but impenetrable for newcomers

### GRABBED BY THE GHOULIES
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Looks a million bucks but lacks excitement and fun. Sadly, it's one for the kids only, which is doubly surprising given it's on Xbox

### GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Overly simplistic F1 racer, the arcade action is unlikely to appeal to hardcore F1 fans

### GREGORY HORROR SHOW
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
A quirky oddity: solve puzzles in a haunted hotel that's full of invention and originality

### GROUP S CHALLENGE
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
This racer dips into Gran Turismo territory but is spoiled by poor handling and less impressive visuals

### GT ADVANCE 3
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
The handling feels like a rally-based game, rather than racing on tarmac but this is still fun

### GTA DOUBLE PACK
CVG Score: 10 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Rockstar**
Two awesome games for the price of one, you can't get a better deal than that, especially when those games are GTA III and Vice City

### GUILTY GEAR X2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Sammy**
Seriously entertaining 2D fighter that should appeal to everyone thanks to depth and great characters

### GUN METAL
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Rage**
Giant flying-mech shooting action, it looks good but the action soon gets very repetitive

### HALO: COMAT EVOLVED
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
The Xbox hit is finally ported to PC with additional multiplayer options. Still damn fine but simpler than other PC shooters

### HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **EA**
The wizard sport is brought to the consoles. It looks incredible but Quidditch itself soon becomes too easy

### HIDDEN & DANGEROUS 2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Take 2**
Improves on virtually every aspect over the classic original. Not perfect but an absorbing experience

### HOUSE OF THE DEAD III
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
More of the same in the zombie-blasting series. It looks great but fails to reach the heights of its predecessors

### HULK
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
There's not enough depth or variety to this movie tie-in, although smashing stuff up is fun for a while

### HUNTER: THE RECKONING
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Virgin**
Mash up monsters in this multiplayer mauler – it's full of blood but suffers dull levels and a lack of variety

### HUNTER: THE RECKONING WAYWARD
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
More of the same in this undemanding sequel, while some new monsters and moves fail to excite

### IGI 2: COVERT STRIKE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
More polished than the original, a mix of stealth and gadgets make it one of the best shooters on the PC

### IKARUGA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Great arcade shoot 'em up with a unique spin: looks cool, is cool, but tough too

### INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
This action-adventure outing captures the Indy spirit with fights, puzzles and your trusty whip

### INDYCAR SERIES
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
Realistic recreation of an IndyCar season but continually racing around the oval tracks quickly gets boring

### IRIDION II
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
A superior shoot 'em up for the GBA, with great level design and addictive action

### JAK II: RENEGADE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Looks and feels very different to the original, a huge adventure full of gameplay twists and surprises

### JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
The best Bond adventure for years is slightly hampered by enemy AI and a weak multiplayer mode

### JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
A great lightsaber/shoot 'em up set deep in the heart of the Star Wars universe – the multiplayer is pants, though

### JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
The saber-spinning action never lets up, great levels and a solid plot make this pure Jedi genius

### JINX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **SCEE**
Simplistic platform adventure with excellent controls, rightly applauded for being a new PSone game!

### JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
An average shooter dogged by iffy AI and poor frame-rates, but with the addition of Dredd it becomes quite good

### JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Intelligent use of the JP license as you build and maintain your very own dino tourist attraction

### KIRBY: NIGHTMARE IN DREAMLAND
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Another old-skool GBA update. Kirby's a great character but his platformer lacks the invention of Mario's best

### KUNG FU CHAOS
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
A beat 'em up party game with comedy characters that soon grates due to its simplicity

### LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Lacklustre return of Lara boasts big levels and impressive set pieces but plenty of misfires and clunky controls

### LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
A satisfying and worthy addition to the Kain series, though not the mega-leap forward fans might have expected

### LE TOUR DE FRANCE
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Not the easiest sport to translate to the PS2, this is decent if unspectacular and very repetitive

### LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Nice selection of legendary wrestlers, beefed up with new game modes but the wrestling lets it down

### LEGO DROME RACERS
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Simple but fun racer that makes good use of the Lego licence and pushes polygons on the GBA

### LOST KINGDOMS 2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Hardcore role-player, looks basic but is atmospheric, engrossing and dangerously addictive

### LORD OF THE RINGS: FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi Universal**
Based on the book and not the movie: dull fighting, dim AI and limited control of the Fellowship spoil the adventure

### LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Basic hack and slash action in this mindless adventure based on the movie. Plenty of fights, but little else

### LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Beautiful presentation and looks but it's little more than a standard hack 'n' slash – one for fans of the movies

### MACE GRIFFIN
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Switching between space and first-person shooters, plenty of action but a dull plot and savage learning curve

### MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Mario and friends are back – new characters, power-ups, co-operative play and courses add to the joy. This is arcade racing at its finest.

### MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Great 2D beat 'em up action with awesome moves, longevity and 32 unlockable characters!

### MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Rockstar**
Short, but this is quality not quantity. A full-on bullet fest that will keep you gripped

### MECHASSAULT
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
A fast-paced mech blaster with great weapons and loads to destroy – it's online, too

### MEDAL OF HONOR ALLIED ASSAULT: SPEARHEAD
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Decent expansion for Allied Assault that improves the look, feel and multiplayer aspects of the WWII shooter

### MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Port of the PS2 WWII blaster with the added advantage of four-player split-screen action

### MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Disappointing sequel that fails to add anything new to the mix. There are loads of better shooters out there

### MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK 3
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Addictive mix of strategy and frantic action make for a top handheld title, although similar to its predecessors

### MEGA MAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Classic Mega Man action merged with RPG elements – it's a good idea but it's also stupidly rock hard

### MEGA MAN ZERO 2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Another hardcore outing for Mega Man, this time it's a pure platformer that newbies might find too tough

### MEN IN BLACK II: ALIEN ESCAPE
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Blast lots of aliens in this uninspired tie-in. Weren't most of the aliens friendly in the movie?

### METAL ARMS
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Robots fight wars on foot and in vehicles with humorous characters and lots and lots of action

### METAL DUNGEON
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Xicat**
A very basic role-player that will only appeal to hardcore fans; even then, there are far better games available

### METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
A remix of Sons Of Liberty for the Xbox. It's bigger with more VR missions and extra Solid Snake

### METROID FUSION
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Another solid adventure for Samus with great puzzles, perfect controls and as highly addictive as ever

### METROID PRIME
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Spectacular sci-fi adventure that mixes exploration, shooting and puzzle solving – essential for Cube owners

### MICROMACHINES
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Another round of tiny tabletop racing, great in multiplayer, but not as fun as previous instalments

### MIDNIGHT CLUB II
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Rockstar**
Super-charged arcade racer where you choose your own path through city streets. Best in multiplayer

### MIDTOWN MADNESS 3
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Take on a variety of wheel-based jobs in vast cities – this is Crazy Taxi turned up to 11

### MINORITY REPORT
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Action-adventure set in a futuristic movie tie-in world, full of fights that soon get repetitive

### MORROWIND: TRIBUNAL
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **UbiSoft**
Slow-paced role-player add-on that will appeal to fans but unlikely to do much for anyone else

### MORTAL KOMBAT TOURNAMENT EDITION
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Solid fighting action offers up a hefty challenge but isn't essential if you own the previous game

### MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Probably the best Mortal Kombat ever, with a mix of old and new characters and surprising depth

### MOTOGP2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
The best console motorbike racer around – now with added multiplayer modes and Xbox Live support

### MOTOGP3
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Updated roster and new tracks are the only improvements this offers over previous editions

### MX SUPERFLY
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
This motocross racer suffers PS2 port graphics and unresponsive controls, but is good fun against a friend

### NBA 2K3
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A fast-paced hoop shooter that looks fantastic and works well on Xbox Live – does basketball better than most

### NBA JAM
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-6 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
Arcade action with basketball kicked into overdrive, with outrageous power-ups and fast-paced thrills

### NBA STREET 2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Aside from improved visuals there's little to recommend this sequel over the original

### NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Screams quality, and furiously enjoyable – this rules the streets as the definitive underground street racer

### NEIGHBOURS FROM HELL
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Jowood**
Simple puzzler where you must play practical jokes on house guests. Amusing, but repetitive and short

### NEXT GEN TENNIS 2003
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Wanadoo**
Improved ball physics and the addition of ball boys and girls fails to impress in this tired sequel

### NHL HITZ PRO
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-10 ■ Publisher: **Midway**
A serious hockey sim. The bone-crunching play transfers well to multiplayer with good online play too

### O.R.B.
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Strategy First, Inc**
Competent sci-fi strategy that is let down by the tricky-to-navigate 3D space. It'll lead to frustration

### ONIMUSHA TACTICS
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Put in the time and effort and you'll discover a brilliant, hugely addictive game

### OTOGI: MYTH OF DEMONS
■ CVG Score: 8■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sega**
Take on marauding hellspawn in this hack and slash adventure – atmospheric, gorgeous and utterly addictive

### OUTLAW GOLF
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **TDK**
A decent game of golf populated by comedy character and cartoon visuals. Shame that there are only three courses

### P.N.03
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Stylish shooter that excites with stunning visuals but the gameplay soon fails to engage

### PAC-MAN WORLD 2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Average platformer with Pac still doing the same old thing: munching pills in colourful locations

### PANDEMONIUM
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Poor PSone platformer is ported to the N-Gage. Wasn't good back then, and it's even less appealing now

### PANZER DRAGOON ORTA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A dragon-riding arcade shooter that, although short, is rock-hard tough and looks absolutely amazing

### PERFECT ACE PRO TOURNAMENT TENNIS
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Oxygen**
Decent controls but this tennis game fails to take flight with drab presentation and a lack of options

### PHANTASY STAR ONLINE: EPISODES I & II
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A jaw-dropping online adventure that boasts lots of extra features and improvements over the Dreamcast original

### PHANTOM CRASH
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Phantagram**
Solid shoot 'em up action with the added incentive of building your own mech to do battle in

### PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Despite the name, this RPG has nothing to do with the movie. Plenty of variety spices up the adventure

### PLANETSIDE
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: **Limitless(!)** ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Hundreds of players online in a first-person shooter futuristic war. The ultimate teamplay shooter

### POP IDOL
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
Sub-standard rhythm action fare using simple presses on a pad or dance mat – and you thought Pop Idol was about singing!

### POKEMON PINBALL RUBY & SAPPHIRE
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Best ever handheld pinball game mixing the catch 'em all elements of Pokémon with fluid gameplay

### POKEMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Freshens up the Pokémon experience without losing any of the fun – lots of new features make it another winner

### POSTAL 2
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Whiptail Interactive**
Be as criminal as you want. Gratuitous nonsense that will get more attention than it deserves

### PREMIER MANAGER 2002/2003
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Zoo Digital**
Real players and teams but suffers a clunky interface and lacks the depth of rival management sims

### PRIDE FC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Brutal mixed martial arts beat 'em up that will appeal to fans of UFC, hardcore fighting action

### PRIMAL
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
This adult adventure suffers from a slow start but tries to offer something new and for the best part succeeds

### PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Time-rewinding platform-jumping extravaganza, that resurrects a classic gaming series. As the Prince, you must negotiate a trap-filled palace

### PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3
■ CVG Score: 10 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Our favourite footie game gets even better with improved controls and moves, pity about the team names

### PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Enjoyable, exciting and satisfying but ultimately it feels like you've been here before

### PROJECT ZERO
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Solve puzzles and tackle ghosts in a haunted mansion in this genuinely creepy adventure

### PUYO POP
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
Colourful puzzler where you connect blobs of the same colour. Works well on the small screen

### PUZZLE BOBBLE VS
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Taito**
The classic puzzler hits the N-Gage with a major design flaw making it near-impossible to play

### RATCHET & CLANK 2: LOCKED AND LOADED
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Bigger, tougher and more varied that the original, but nothing that we haven't seen before

### RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Polished platform action with solid levels and cool mini-games, although a little similar to the previous game

### RED FACTION II
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
This humdrum shooter stands out due to a strong story, excellent multiplayer and impressive Geo-Mod technology

### RESIDENT EVIL 0
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
For the first time you can control two characters at once, but apart from that it's the same Resi action

### RESIDENT EVIL 2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Port of the PSone original complete with the control flaws and dated graphics, a classic, but not essential

### RESIDENT EVIL 3
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Another PSone port with untouched graphics. The introduction of the Nemesis makes it a jumpy affair

### RESIDENT EVIL DEAD AIM
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
The best Resident Evil gun game so far, but that's not saying much and compared to Time Crisis, it's pony

### RESTAURANT EMPIRE
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nobilis**
Run your own restaurant – good idea but it soon becomes as complex and taxing as the real thing

### ROBIN HOOD: DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Metro 3D**
Great mix of game styles in this port of the Amiga classic, strategy, jousting and duelling are all covered

### RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: OPERATION RESURRECTION
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
This zombie blasting shooter isn't as exciting as the PC predecessor and lacks multiplayer support

### RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-6 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Solid update of the famous shooter, with a decent range of weapons and solid multiplayer and online support

### RTX RED ROCK
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
With puzzles, exploration and combat there's plenty of variety but the poor combat lets the adventure down

**RUNABOUT 3 NEO AGE** PS2
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Bam!**
Drive anywhere racer that's full of arcade action and little else, pity the graphics aren't up to scratch

**RYGAR: LEGENDARY ADVENTURE** PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Wanadoo**
Exploration, puzzle-solving and plenty of hack and slash action make for an entertaining if easy adventure

**SEGA BASS FISHING DUEL** PS2
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Fishing gets a dose of arcade thrills in this frantic fish 'em up that boasts two-player action

**SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY** PS2 XBX PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
WWII airborne shoot 'em up that's neither full-on sim or arcade blaster. We prefer Crimson Skies

**SERIOUS SAM** XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Take 2**
A no-brain blaster ported from PC made fresh with colourful visuals, huge gangs of enemies and lots of offbeat humour

**SHENMUE II** XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Compelling adventure that looks stunning and is full of gameplay surprises. Where's part III?

**SHINING SOUL** GBA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A fast-paced RPG that while not being original is livened up with the multiplayer support

**SHINOBI** PC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Uninspired update of an old fave, this bland scrolling beat 'em up should have been left in the past

**SHREK SUPER PARTY** XBX
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **TDK**
Poor mini-games and laughable graphics make for an uninspired and forgettable party game

**SILENT HILL 2: DIRECTOR'S CUT** PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Another creepy adventure in the foggy town of Silent Hill – slow-paced, but you won't forget the sick scenes

**SILENT HILL 3** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Fine if you're a fan of the series, but the third instalment fails to excite or surprise like the second part

**SILENT SCOPE 3** PS2
■ CVG Score: 3 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
This sequel offers nothing that the previous games didn't do better, a sad demise of an arcade classic

**SIM CITY 4** PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Update offering the same absorbing city building gameplay now with the ability to build bigger than before

**SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS** GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Cute graphics hide a hardcore RPG that takes place in a unique world of flying pirate ships

**SLY RACCOON** PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
A great mix of ideas makes for an entertaining if unoriginal platformer, the PS2's best in the genre at the time

**SMASH CARS** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Metro 3D**
A fun RC racer that offers good course design and lots of vehicles with unique handling, good for a whirl

**SMUGGLER'S RUN** GBA
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Zoo**
The gameplay is identical to the PS2 parent, but it's too ambitious for the GBA and looks a mess

**SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
A simplistic team-based shooter – it does nothing new, but is perfect to kick-start PS2's online community

**SOLDIER OF FORTUNE II: DOUBLE HELIX** XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-12 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Solid shooter that's spiced up with the amount of damage you can inflict on your enemies

**SONICN** NG
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sega**
Sonic's speed is firmly in place in this N-Gage outing, another competent platformer for the spiky hedgehog

**SOS THE FINAL ESCAPE** PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Agetec Europe**
Survive the aftermath of an earthquake in this original adventure that's full of novel ideas

**SOULCALIBUR II** PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **EA/Nintendo**
The best arcade style beat 'em up currently on consoles, polished to perfection and full of depth

**SPLASHDOWN: RIDES GONE WILD** PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
This jetski racer suffers from poor handling and is too slow to be considered exciting. There's far better out there

**SSX 3** PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **EA**
There's more freedom in this sequel than the previous entries. Great controls, courses and tricks make it a winner

**STAR FOX ADVENTURES** GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
There's lots of variety in this sumptuous adventure – it apes Zelda a little too much to be considered truly original

**STAR TREK: ELITE FORCE II** PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
A major improvement over the original, this shooter has great detail and should appeal across the board, not just to Trekkies

**STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE** GC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Lucasarts**
Apart from on-foot sections that are pretty poor, this sequel may look stunning but offers nothing new

**STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER** PS2 GC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
This controls great with a versatile lead character, but the action and levels soon get repetitive

**STAR WARS: CLONE WARS** GC
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Arcade action with plenty to blast in the Star Wars universe, looks great but gets dull after a few hours

**STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC** XBX
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
The best RPG of 2003 doesn't feature orcs or come from Japan, it's set in the heart of the Star Wars universe and is an absolute corker of a game.

**STARSKY & HUTCH** PS2 GBA
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Empire**
A nostalgia-filled driving game that fans of the 1970s show will enjoy, but Vice City does it all better

**STEEL BATTALION** XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
A hardcore mech game that boasts the biggest most expensive controller on the planet, utterly unique

**STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 UPPER** GBA
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Thirty-three fighters, Versus, World Tour and Survival modes are all crammed into a tiny cart. Pure gaming pleasure

**STUNTMAN** GBA
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Vehicular stunt action that tries to ape the PS2 version too much. Overly ambitious and a little slow

**SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL** PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
A simplistic recreation of the thong-wearing sport that plays it safe by featuring guys as well as buxom babes

**SUPER MARIO BROS. 3: MARIO ADVANCE 4** GBA
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Thirteen years ago this was essential, but if you've already bought Super Mario World it's a step back in terms of gameplay

**SUPER MONKEY BALL** NG
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
The 45 levels are great but N-Gage Monkey Ball would have been essential with multiplayer support

**SUPER MONKEY BALL 2** GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
More devious ball-rolling levels and an expanded selection of mini games including Monkey Tennis! A winner

**SUPER MONKEY BALL JNR.** GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Great conversion of the monkey puzzler, including multiplayer levels, only the lack of analogue controls spoil it

**SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO** GBA
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Addictive puzzler that is easy to pick up but hard to put down, lots of extras will have you playing for ages

**SUPERMAN THE MAN OF STEEL** GC
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Looks and sounds good, but plays like a turkey with poor controls and repetitive, uninspired action

**SWAT GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM** PS2 XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Fun and instantly playable, a solid, enjoyable shooter with the addition of voice recognition

**SX SUPERSTAR** PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
This supercross racer stumbles with the races themselves and plays it for big tricks. A bit of a mess

**SYBERIA** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microids**
A point-and-click puzzler that looks great and boasts smart challenges. The controls make it a little clunky, though

**TAO FENG: FIST OF THE LOTUS** XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Breakable environments and limb damage make this beat 'em up full of ideas. It's just a shame the fights are lacklustre

**TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Stealthy Ninja action with lots of new features, but it fails to excite and looks like the PSone original

**THE GETAWAY** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **SCEE**
A gritty gangster epic, boasting a stunning London backdrop. Just a shame it feels so sloppy for a major release

**THE GREAT ESCAPE** PS2 XBX PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **SCI**
The classic movie is recreated in this action adventure that mixes stealth, puzzles and shooting. Flawed but fun

**THE HOBBIT** GBA
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
Like Zelda but with a higher dwarf count. The graphics sometimes make it tough to follow the action though

**THE ITALIAN JOB: L.A. HEIST** PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
A speedy racer with plenty of tricky Mini Coopers, but way too short – you'll finish it in a day

**THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST** GBA
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
One of the finest adventure games ever produced now with an added multiplayer mode, flawless and utterly essential

**THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER** GC
■ CVG Score: 10 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
A magical adventure that looks like a cartoon, this is epic, full of memorable moments and absorbing gameplay

**THE LOST VIKINGS** GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
A solid retro platform puzzler that is punishing due to a trial and error structure, solid stuff if you can deal with the pain

**THE MARK OF KRI** PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
A sumptuous scrolling beat 'em up with a great combat system, just a pity its over all too soon

**THE POWERPUFF GIRLS: RELISH RAMPAGE** PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Bam!**
Fans of the quirky cartoon will enjoy this adventure full of combat and humour. Shame all the enemies stay on the ground

**THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE** GBA
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
The console versions weren't much cop and this handheld entry isn't any better. Shabby and very basic

**THE SIMPSON'S: HIT & RUN** PS2 XBX GC PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
The Simpsons do GTA. Grab vehicles and carry out a variety of missions in the best use of the licence to date

**THE SIMS** PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **EA**
The PC hit arrives on consoles complete with a new Get A Life mode and more dynamic and immediate gameplay

**THE SIMS ONLINE** PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-lots ■ Publisher: **EA**
The ultimate hippie nirvana, more like the ultimate online chat experience than a game, but still strangely compelling

**THE SUM OF ALL FEARS** PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
A dumbed-down version of Rainbow Six to tie-in with the Tom Clancy-penned movie of the same name. Disappointing

### TIGER WOOD'S PGA TOUR 2004
PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **EA**
Truly this is the Gran Turismo of golf games. Boasting a great engine wrapped up in loads of modes and unlockable extras, it's pretty much essential stuff

### TIME CRISIS 3
PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
The latest instalment gives you a few decent game modes but it's all over way to quickly

### TOCA RACE DRIVER
XBX PS2 PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
The PS2 racer hits Xbox with a fresh lick of paint, the story mode adds a new twist and the races are tense affairs

### TOEJAM & EARL III
XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
A wacky adventure full of humour and original ideas, great if you're looking for something different

### TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON
XBX PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
An average singleplayer shooter, but the online play on Xbox makes for a more enjoyable experience

### TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER
XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Fifteen more missions for Ghost Recon freaks. Planning and teamwork are as essential as ever. Solid stuff

### TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOX SIX 3
XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Ah, Mr Clancy, you are spoiling us. This is an addictive, golden gaming nugget and probably the best tactical shooter available on the console right now

### TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOX SIX 3: RAVEN SHIELD
PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
The toughest outing for the team-based shooter so far. You'll die too many times, but it's still compelling

### TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL
XBX PC GC GBA
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
It's as tough as nails and a little too short. That's the bad news. The good news is that this absorbing, stealth-filled adventure is highly exciting and probably even better than Metal Gear Solid. Honest

### TOMB RAIDER STARRING LARA CROFT
NG
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Eidos**
Lara's original adventure looks incredible on the N-Gage, a massive quest spoiled by some bloody awkward controls

### TOMB RAIDER: THE PROPHECY
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
A faithful handheld adventure for Lara mixing platforms and puzzles that plays as good as it looks

### TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER
NG
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Taking elements from the first three Hawks, this is solid but suffers from the N-Gage's fiddly design

### TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
PS2 XBX
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
King of all he skates, number four in the series boasts bigger levels, more tricks and improved objectives. Certainly a major improvement over number three, thank God...

### TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Bored doing the same old thing? THUG has all kinds of new stuff to do, but the new ideas are disappointingly hit and miss. Flawed but definitely still worth a long, hard look

### TOP ANGLER
PS2
■ CVG Score: 3 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Xicat**
A lack of interaction makes this a dull experience, press some buttons and wiggle the line, that's it!

### TOP SPIN
XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
Brilliantly conceived, looks and plays like a dream, played on Xbox Live it's even better

### TREASURE PLANET
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Disney Interactive**
This RTS tie-in with the Disney movie provides a great strategy game that, although simple, is still appealing

### TRIBES: AERIAL ASSAULT
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Vivendi**
This should have been an online hit for the PS2 but poor team communication hampers the potential

### TRON 2.0
PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-16 ■ Publisher: **Buena Vista Games**
Compelling story, huge levels, smooth controls and ruthless enemies and all polished to perfection

### TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF L.A.
PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Not as innovative as GTA, but you'll still have a blast playing it even with the lack of variety and length

### TWISTED METAL BLACK: ONLINE
PS2
■ CVG Score: 4 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Online-only edition of Twisted Metal Black. Not the most exciting online game, however

### UNLIMITED SAGA
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Atari**
An original RPG that's very detailed but also overly complicated, one for hardcore RPG fans

### UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION
XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A quality first-person shooter combined with the ease of getting online make this a winner

### UNREAL II: THE AWAKENING
PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Great weapons make it fun but it lacks innovation and requires a monster PC to run well

### VEXX
PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
If you don't expect any gameplay innovation this platformer is big, challenging and fun

### VIETCONG
PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-32 ■ Publisher: **Take 2**
Good battles and a cool soundtrack, but suffers from poor graphics and a major lack of atmosphere

### VIEWTIFUL JOE
GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Capcom**
Bonkers beat 'em up that looks like a comic book crossed with a firework display – good fun

### VIRTUA COP ELITE EDITION
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Classic lightgun bumper pack with both games getting a slight visual boost. Simple but still good

### VIRTUA FIGHTER 4: EVOLUTION
PS2
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Sega**
Now with extra characters and a deeper Quest mode, it's the best technical fighter around

### VIRTUA TENNIS
GBA
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
Perfect tennis when on the move and the mini-games will keep you entertained

### VIRTUA TENNIS 2
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Plays as well as it did on Dreamcast, but a shame the visuals have suffered in the conversion

### VOODOO VINCE
XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Microsoft**
A smart platformer with some novel ideas, pity the execution wasn't a little better

### V-RALLY 3
XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Infogrames**
A great-looking racer and loads of modes, but WRC and Colin McRae do this much better

### WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Take the Tony Hawk control system and hit the water in this exhilarating extreme sport

### WAR OF THE MONSTERS
PS2
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Smash cities and battle beasts, fun for short bursts but you won't be playing for long

### WARHAMMER 40,000: FIREWARRIOR
PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-8 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Solid first-person shooter that makes good use of the licence to feel different to the competition

### WARIO WARE, INC.
GBA
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
Simplistic mini-games played at breakneck speed, it's unique, addictive and utterly essential

### WARIO WORLD
GC
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Nintendo**
An unremarkable platformer that does nothing new. A lazy effort by Nintendo's standards

### WILD ARMS 3
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Great graphics and a clever combat system, but it might be hard going for RPG novices

### WING COMMANDER THE PROPHECY
GBA
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Take 2**
Too ambitious for the GBA with laughable FMV, oversensitive controls and dull space combat

### WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2003
XBX
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Codemasters**
Great realism and depth of play make this the best snooker game out there

### WORLD RACING
XBX PC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **TDK**
Extremely polished looking racer that doesn't play as well as it looks. Even worse on the PC

### WRC 2 EXTREME
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Sony**
Solid dirt-churning action but doesn't do enough to worry Colin McRae and friends

### WRC 3
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **SCEE**
Well-presented rally action that benefits from the official licence but lacks real depth

### WWE CRUSH HOUR
PS2 GC
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Wrestling stars cause carnage in cars! Dumb but fun action with limited game modes

### WWE RAW II: RUTHLESS AGGRESSION
XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
A vast improvement over the original with a Season mode, more characters and match types

### WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN
PS2
■ CVG Score: 9 ■ Players: 1-6 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
The wrestling side's been beefed up to make this the best grappler yet with loads of new modes

### WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX
GC
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Apart from improved graphics this offers nothing over Wrestlemania 18, with poor extra modes

### X2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE
PS2 XBX GC PC
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Good story but the action's unspectacular and button-bashers will sail through it

### XGRA
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Acclaim**
Exhilarating arcade racing that's insanely fast and has some great weapons, but a lack of depth

### XIII
PS2 XBX GC PC
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Ubisoft**
Not the best shooter around, but the presentation sets it apart and it dares to be different

### X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION
PS2 XBX GC
■ CVG Score: 6 ■ Players: 1-4 ■ Publisher: **Activision**
Strong cast of characters but the controls are so bad for a beat 'em up that you won't care

### YAGER
XBX
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **THQ**
Airborne shoot 'em up that's a little too tame to get excited about but has a nice variety to missions

### YU-GI-OH! DARK DUEL STORIES
GBA
■ CVG Score: 5 ■ Players: 2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Too many strategy elements of the card duels have been abandoned to make this work

### YU-GI-OH! DUELISTS OF THE ROSES
PS2
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Disappointing in the presentation but near faultless when it comes to the card duelling

### YU-GI-OH! DUNGEON DICE MONSTERS
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
If you like strategy games and don't mind a steep learning curve this one's a winner

### YU-GI-OH! FORBIDDEN MEMORIES
PS1
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
Highly addictive and absorbing card battling that makes a stylish transition to the PSone

### YU-GI-OH! WORLDWIDE EDITION
GBA
■ CVG Score: 7 ■ Players: 1-2 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
The most complete version of the card battling game, learn the rules and it's truly addictive

### ZOE: 2ND RUNNER
PS2
■ CVG Score: 8 ■ Players: 1 ■ Publisher: **Konami**
The best-looking arcade-style robot shooter ever, with immense battles and loads of new weapons

**CACKMAN'S THOUGHT OF THE MONTH** I was driving in home the other day in my Cack-Kart, and I was right by my house when some LIGHTNING STRUCK ME out of NOWHERE and I COULDN'T POSSIBLY AVOID IT. Ha ha! Amazing fun.

# CACKMAN©

THE INDEPE[illegible]MING NATION

# CACKMAN'S CRYSTAL BALL

## YOUR INFALLIBLE GUIDE TO THE HOTTEST GAMING HAPPENINGS COMING UP IN 2004

### LETTERS TO CACKMAN

Dear Cackman
What is your favourite game sound effect? Mine's the jingle that plays in Zelda when you find an item. I hum it all the time!
Dan Perkins, Torquay

*My fave is when I pause Mario Kart, open the GameCube lid, throw in a medium-sized hamster and smash the lid closed with a brick. A squeak, and a dull crack. Makes Mario Kart much more exciting, too.*

### NINTENDO'S NEW CONSOLE!

It's not GameCube 2. It's not GBA 2. It's... PLAYSTATION 2! Nintendo buys Sony's ageing machine and sprays it purple. Well, at least it's got some games!

### THE FINAL PSP DESIGN!

At the last minute, Sony abandons the Atari Lynx layout for something more desirable: a woman's torso with analogue sticks where the nipples should be.

### PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4!

Konami's licensing department pulls out all the stops. They get the full rosters and kits for Harlequins, Sheffield Steelers and Leicester Riders – none of which are football teams.

### XBOX 2 ANNOUNCED!

Bill Gates fires up his new baby at the Game Developer's Conference. It's so powerful, it becomes self-aware, realises it's not a PS3, and self-destructs.

### ELECTRONIC ARTS CHANGES TACK!

The US giant realises that the little bits of 'game' it puts in between the movie sequences in licensed games are taking too long to program, and makes the decision to remove them completely.

### SEGA MAKES A SONIC GAME!

It's revolutionary. He runs really fast, and you hardly feel like you're controlling him. He collects gold rings. For added Sega stupidity, it's a 3DO exclusive.



## HOW I STOLE HALF-LIFE 2

**Get the inside story as Cackman interviews the man behind the crime of the century**

■ Cackman: So, who are you?
■ **Geoff:** C@11 me 1337_DOOD

■ **Cackman:** I thought you said your name was Geoff Fucca?
■ **Geoff:** Cou1d u pls c@11 me 1337_DOOD. Sometimes ppl say my surn@me wr0ng. It's pr0n0unced foo-car. Don't print th@t anyway, or V@lve will catch me. Promise?

■ **Cackman:** Okay, promise. How did you pull off THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY!?
■ **Geoff:** I typed in 'Half-Life 2 source code' into the se@rch box on G0ogle. It w@s the third one down, after a dwarf p0rn site and a pl@ce that sold helmets m@de of cheese.

■ **Cackman:** Must have taken ages to download?
■ **Geoff:** My mum won't let me have br0@db@nd, so it took four weeks. I'm quite surprised they didn't notice. That's the thing about Fuccas, so c@reful with their money. I'm forever telling her she's a tight Fucca.

■ **Cackman:** So what's the game like? Worth delaying it for everyone else?
■ **Geoff:** It's awesome, guy! U know th@t anyw@y: U were pl@ying it at mine the other night. U were ages in my big sister's room as well. Sounded like U were h@ving a hell of a job ch@nging th@t lightbulb, bouncing on the bed and p@nting!

■ **Cackman:** So what's next from THE SUPER H@XX0R? Mario 128?
■ **Geoff:** Nah, I pl@yed that. It's rubbish. There are 128 crisp p@ckets in the c@stle grounds, and Mario has to pick them up with one of those cl@w gr@bber things.

### WRITE TO CACKMAN

You lot must have ideas. Questions. Theories. Write to Cackman at the usual address, and the best will win an awesome prize! Senders of anything Cackman considers to be crap will be subjected to GBH in text form on this very page. Come on! You want your 15 minutes of fame don't you? What else have you got to live for in your stupid little lives?



Cackman's opinions aren't necessarily those of CVG. He's a git, see

# Cool stuff for cool mobiles

## Ringtones & Polyphonics

Regular Ringtones for: Nokia - Samsung - Motorola - Siemens - Sagem
Polyphonics for: Nokia - Samsung - Sharp - Sagem - Panasonic - Sony Ericsson - Motorola - Siemens

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SHUT UP - black eyed peas | 113123 | SIGNED SEALED DELIVERED - blue | 113224 | MY IMMORTAL - evanescence | 113277 |
| JUMP - girls aloud | 113163 | THE VOICE WITHIN - christina aguilera | 113265 | SAY IT ISN'T YOU - gareth gates | 113278 |
| HEY YA - outkast | 113176 | FIGHTING ... - beyonce ft missy elliot | 113236 | I'M LOVING IT - justin timberlake | 113280 |
| MANDY - westlife | 113228 | AINT WHAT YOU DO - big brovaz | 113251 | CRASHIN A PARTY - lumidee feat n.o.r.e | 113281 |
| FORTUNE FADED - red hot chili peppers | 113198 | MAD ... - michael andrews ft gary jules | 113303 | GOD IS A DJ - pink | 113283 |
| MAKE ME WANNA ... - blu cantrell | 113182 | IZ U - nelly | 113261 | TOO LOST IN YOU - sugababes | 113286 |
| IT TAKES TWO - fatman scoop | 113302 | NOTHING FAILS - madonna | 113256 | FEELING FINE - ultrabeat | 113288 |
| LIGHT YOUR ... - busta rhymes ft pharrell | 113300 | I SEE GIRLS - studio b feat romeo | 113273 | I'M YOUR MAN - shane ritchie | 113289 |
| STUNT 101 - g-unit | 113252 | BRING IT ON - alastair griffin | 113274 | BAD BOY THIS BAD ... - da band | 113301 |
| LADIES NIGHT - atomic kitten | 113229 | PROPER CRIMBO - avid merrion | 113275 | TEARS ON MY PILLOW - s club 8 | 113304 |

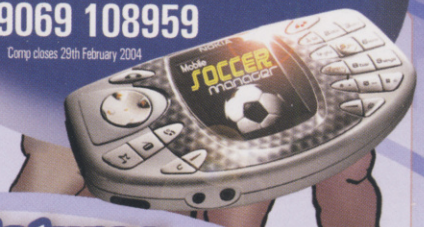
YES!!! All RINGTONES are MONOPHONIC and POLYPHONIC

## WIN the new Nokia N-GAGE!

The NGAGE is much more than just a phone... you can also use it to play games and MP3's or to go online! And it could be yours if you win this fantastic competition!

**09069 108959**

Comp closes 29th February 2004

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SKATRIX 210153

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SKARK ATTACK 210101

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SOCCER MANAGER 210227

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GAMES COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3410, 3510i, 5100, 6100, 6310i, 6610, 7210, 7250, 7650, 8910i SHARP: GX10 SIEMENS: C55, M50, MT50 MOTOROLA T720

### CHART

| | |
|---|---|
| HOLE IN THE HEAD - sugababes | 113022 |
| SLOW - kylie minogue | 113084 |
| SUPERSTAR - jamelia | 113055 |
| FLIP REVERSE - blazin squad | 113129 |
| ME AGAINST ... - britney ft madonna | 113140 |
| SWEET DREAMS - rachel stevens | 112949 |
| MAYBE THAT'S ... - alex parks | 113187 |
| WHITE FLAG - dido | 112837 |
| CRASHED THE WEDDING - busted | 113151 |
| TROUBLE - pink | 113042 |
| STATE OF MIND - holly valance | 113054 |
| SEXED UP - robbie williams | 113064 |
| GUILTY - blue | 113044 |
| DIRRTY - christina aguilera | 112256 |

### DANCE

| | |
|---|---|
| BE FAITHFUL - fatman scoop | 113086 |
| I CANT LET YOU GO - ian van dahl | 112918 |
| MUSIC AND YOU - room 5 | 113174 |
| PRETTY GREEN EYES - ultrabeat | 112877 |
| FLY ON THE WINGS OF LOVE - xtm | 112705 |
| RHYTHM IS A ... - snap vs cj stone | 112485 |
| MARIA - scooter | 113030 |
| BOYS OF SUMMER - dj sammy | 112387 |
| SUMMER JAM - ud project vs sunclub | 113104 |
| LONELINESS - tomcraft | 112576 |

### ROCK

| | |
|---|---|
| I BELIEVE IN A ... - the darkness | 112872 |
| SWEET CHILD O MINE - guns n roses | 111258 |
| IT'S MY LIFE - no doubt | 113227 |
| BAT OUT OF HELL - meatloaf | 111286 |
| ENTER SANDMAN - metallica | 111371 |
| NOVEMBER RAIN - guns n roses | 112596 |
| LIVING ON A PRAYER - bon jovi | 111376 |
| SOMEDAY - nickelback | 112967 |
| BEAUTIFUL DAY - u2 | 111320 |
| CANT STOP - red hot chili peppers | 112404 |
| ST ANGER - metallica | 112789 |
| EYE OF THE TIGER - survivor | 112456 |

### R & B

| | |
|---|---|
| WHERE IS THE ... - black eyed peas | 112890 |
| BABY BOY - beyonce ft sean paul | 112933 |
| BREATHE - blu cantrell feat. sean paul | 112521 |
| YOU DON'T KNOW ... - alicia keys | 113291 |
| NAUGHTY GIRL - beyonce knowles | 113292 |
| ME MYSELF AND I - beyonce knowles | 113293 |
| NOT TODAY - mary j blige feat eve | 113282 |
| SENORITA - justin timberlake | 112732 |
| THOIA THONG - r kelly | 112948 |
| FRONTIN - pharrell williams feat jay z | 112855 |
| I BELIEVE I CAN FLY - r kelly | 113060 |
| NEVER LEAVE YOU - lumidee | 112774 |
| IGNITION - r kelly | 112588 |
| STEP IN THE NAME OF LOVE - r kelly | 113193 |

### HIP HOP

| | |
|---|---|
| P.I.M.P - 50 cent | 112599 |
| REIGNS - ja rule | 112679 |
| X GONNA GIVE IT TO YA - dmx | 112617 |
| CLAP BACK - ja rule | 113238 |
| SMELLS LIKE FUNK - black eyed peas | 113231 |
| CHANGE CLOTHES - jay z | 113279 |
| FORGET ABOUT DRE - dr dre | 111138 |
| RIGHT THURR - chingy | 112868 |
| GOT SOME TEETH - obie trice | 113041 |
| 21 QUESTIONS - 50 cent ft nate dogg | 112582 |
| BEAUTIFUL - snoop dogg | 112511 |
| SHAKE ... - nelly & p diddy & murphy... | 112839 |
| 8 MILE - eminem | 112376 |
| BUSINESS - eminem | 112695 |
| SUPERMAN - eminem | 112427 |
| INTO YOU - fabolous | 112916 |
| WHERE THE HOOD AT - dmx | 113035 |
| PASS THAT DUTCH - missy elliott | 113074 |
| CALIFORNIA LOVE - dr dre and tupac | 111169 |
| OOH WEE - mark ronson & ghostface | 113040 |
| ACT A FOOL - ludacris | 112896 |
| MAGIC STICK - lil kim feat 50 cent | 112682 |

### NU METAL

| | |
|---|---|
| FROM THE INSIDE - linkin park | 113241 |
| NUMB - linkin park | 112886 |
| BRING ME TO LIFE - evanescence | 112651 |
| FEELING THIS - blink 182 | 113189 |
| GOING UNDER - evanescence | 112968 |
| FAINT - linkin park | 112713 |
| THE ANTHEM - good charlotte | 112493 |

### CLASSIC TONES

| | |
|---|---|
| IN DA CLUB - 50 cent | 112440 |
| SATISFACTION - benny benassi | 112751 |
| CRAZY IN LOVE - beyonce knowles | 112707 |
| DILEMMA - nelly feat. kelly rowland | 112221 |
| HEAVEN - dj sammy | 112229 |
| LOSE YOURSELF - eminem | 112289 |
| IGNITION - REMIX - r kelly | 112642 |
| YOU'RE A SUPERSTAR - love inc | 112329 |
| SMOOTH CRIMINAL - alien ant farm | 111377 |
| CASTLES IN THE SKY - ian van dahl | 111270 |
| BECAUSE I GOT HIGH - afroman | 111454 |
| HOW YOU REMIND ME - nickelback | 111671 |
| MOVE YOUR FEET - junior senior | 112441 |

### PARTY TIME

| | |
|---|---|
| CHIHUAHUA - dj bobo | 112905 |
| ONE STEP BEYOND - madness | 111278 |
| SUMMER OF 69 - bryan adams | 112531 |

### CLUB CLASSICS

| | |
|---|---|
| INSOMNIA - faithless | 111569 |
| SANDSTORM - darude | 111290 |
| CAFE DEL MAR - energy 52 | 111386 |

### REGGAE

| | |
|---|---|
| TURN ME ON - kevin lyttle | 113100 |
| LIKE GLUE - sean paul | 112785 |
| GET BUSY - sean paul | 112634 |
| NO WOMAN NO CRY - bob marley | 111331 |

### URBAN

| | |
|---|---|
| WOMEN OF THE WORLD - lisa maffia | 113242 |
| STYLE - mis-teeq | 113208 |
| BABY BOY - big brovaz | 112859 |
| FIX UP LOOK SHARP - dizzee rascal | 112937 |

### FOOTBALL

| | |
|---|---|
| YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE | 111351 |
| ARE YOU READY FOR ... - elton john | 112869 |
| SOCCER AM CATWALK - jean knight | 112559 |
| SOCCER AM NUTMEG FILES | 113209 |
| MATCH OF THE DAY | 111126 |

### CHRISTMAS

| | |
|---|---|
| I WISH IT COULD BE ... - wizard | 111521 |
| CHRISTMAS IS ALL ... - bill nighy | 113294 |
| MERRY CHRISTMAS - slade | 111552 |
| FAIRYTALE - the pogues & kirsty ... | 113148 |
| I WAS ... - st etienne ft tim burgess | 113149 |
| LAST CHRISTMAS - wham | 111525 |
| RUDOLPH THE RED NOSED ... | 111530 |
| JINGLE BELLS - christmas | 111529 |
| ROCKIN ... - mel smith & kym wylde | 113146 |

### THEMES

| | |
|---|---|
| ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES | 111369 |
| EXORCIST | 111871 |
| PHOENIX NIGHTS | 112364 |
| THE SIMPSONS | 111132 |
| MISSION IMPOSSIBLE | 111121 |
| ROCKY - jogging theme | 112481 |
| THE A TEAM | 111115 |
| DIRTY DANCING | 111249 |
| GOOD BAD AND THE UGLY | 111181 |
| ROCKY | 111141 |
| JACKASS | 112554 |
| AXEL F - beverley hills cop | 111601 |
| MUPPETS | 111134 |
| HARRY POTTER | 111548 |
| KNIGHT RIDER | 111127 |
| SEX AND THE CITY | 111673 |
| THE MATRIX - WAKE UP | 111848 |
| JAMES BOND | 111119 |
| STAR WARS | 111125 |
| FRIENDS | 111152 |
| THE TERMINATOR | 111602 |
| BENNY HILL | 111139 |
| TOP GUN | 111860 |
| 633 SQUADRON | 111608 |
| PINK PANTHER | 111133 |
| INDIANA JONES - theme | 111466 |

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Pokemon Ruby
Pokemon Sapphire
Rayman 3
Robot Wars: Extr.Destruction
Sapphire Pokemon
Sonic Advance
Sonic Advance 2
Spy Hunter
Star Wars: Att. of Clones
Super Bust A Move
Super Mario Advance 2
The Fellowship of the Ring
The Two Towers
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Yu-Gi-Oh! Et. Duelist Saga
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### PC

Age of Empires
Age of Mythology
**Broken Sword: S. Dragon**
Chrome
Com. & Conq.: Tiberian Sun
Command & Conquer
Commandos 2
Commandos 3
Commandos B. Enemy Lines
Doom III*
Empire Earth
Enter the Matrix
FIFA 2004
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Half Life 3*
Max Payne 2
Racer, Star Wars
Ragnorak
Railroad Tycoon 3
Rally Trophy
Red Faction 2
Redguard
Reign of Chaos
Renegade
Resident Evil
Resistance, Op. Flashpoint
Rise of Nations
Robot Wars: Extr.Destruction
Sims Hot Date
Sims on Holiday
Sims: Unleashed
Soldier of Fortune 2
St. Wars: Knights Old Rep.*
The Simpsons: Hit & Run*
**The Sims: Makin' Magic**
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.

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### GAMECUBE

Agent Under Fire
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu*
Bounty Hunter, Star Wars
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Bulletproof Monk*
Burnout
Dakar 2
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate
Dark Legacy
Dark Tomorrow, Batman
Darkened Skye
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
Dead to Rights
Deadly Alliance
Def Jam Vendetta
Defender
Desert Storm
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dinosaur Planet
Doshin the Giant
Eternal Darkness
Gladius*
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Magical Mirror
Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Mario Party 4
Mario Sunshine
Matrix, Enter the
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun*
Mega Man Network Tran.
Metroid Prime
Minority Report
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
MTV's Celebrity Deathmatch
MX Superfly
Mystic Heroes
Need for Speed Undergr.*
Prince of Persia: S. of Time*
Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
Reckless: Yakuza Missions
Red Card Soccer 2003
Red Faction 2
Reign Of Fire
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
**Resident Evil Zero**
Return of the King
Rev. of the Flying Dutchman
Robotech: Battlecry
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Rune: Lost Kingdoms
Rune: Lost Kingdoms 2
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Skies of Arcadia Legends
**Star Wars: Rebel Strike**
**Star Wars: Rogue Leader**
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Smash Bros Melee
The Hobbit*
The L. of Zelda: WindWaker
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Tony Hawk's Underground*
True Crime: Streets of LA
WWE Wrestlemania X8
XGRA*
XIII (Thirteen)*
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
**Zelda: The Wind Waker**

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Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline
Alter Echo
Amped 2*
Amped Snowboarding
Backyard Wrestling
Beyond Good and Evil*
BMX XXX
**Broken Sword: S. Dragon**
**Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds**
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Burnout 2 Point of Impact
Championship Manager '02
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Counter Strike*
Dead or Alive Volleyball
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dino Crisis 3
Disney's Extreme Skate Adv.
Dungeon & Dragons:Heroes
**Dynasty Warriors 4**
Enter the Matrix
Falcone: Into Maelstrom*
FIFA 2004
Grand Theft Auto 3
Halo
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hulk
Hunter: Redeemer
James Bond: Agent Under F.
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis
LMA Manager 2003
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Magic Gathering Battlegr.*
Max Payne
Max Payne 2*
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun*
Midnight Club 2
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Myst 3: Exile
Prince of Persia: S. of Time*
Project Gotham Racing
Project Gotham Racing 2*
Project Zero
Rainbow Six 3
Return of the King
Rising Sun, Medal of Honor*
Sega GT 2002
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Soldier of Fortune 2
Splinter Cell
SSX 3
Star Wars: Jedi Academy*
Star Wars: Knights Old Rep.
SWAT: Global Strike Team*
Terminator 3 R.of Machines*
Test Drive: Overdrive
The Hobbit*
The Return of the King
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Treason of Isengard*
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground*
Transworld Snowboarding
**True Crime: Streets of LA**
Turok, Evolution
XIII (Thirteen)*
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
Yager

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### PLAYSTATION 2

**A = 0 1**
Ace Combat 4: Shat. Skies
Ace Combat: Distant Thund.
Age of Empires 2
Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
Angel of Darkness
Army Men RTS

**B = 0 2**
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
BloodRayne
BMX XXX
**Broken Sword: S. Dragon**
**Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds**
Burnout
Burnout 2 Point of Impact

**C = 0 3**
Club Football
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart*

**D = 0 4**
Dark Cloud 2
Dead to Rights
Def Jam Vendetta
Desert Storm 2
Devil May Cry 2
Die Hard: Vendetta
Disney's Extreme Skate Adv.
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2*
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Driver 3*
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 4

**E = 0 5**
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Monkey Island
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick

**F = 0 6**
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Final Fantasy 10
Finding Nemo
Fire Warrior
Freedom Fighters

**G = 0 7**
Getaway
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto 3
**Grand Theft Auto: V. City**
Great Escape

**H = 0 8**
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Haven: Call of the King
Headhunter
Here Comes The Pain
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hulk

**I = 0 9**
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb

**J = 1 0**
Jak & Daxter
Jak 2: Renegade
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Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis

**K = 1 1**
Kessen 2
Kingdom Hearts

**L = 1 2**
LMA Manager 2003
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers

**M = 1 3**
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Manhunt*
Matrix, Enter the
Max Payne
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club
Midnight Club 2

**N = 1 4**
Naval Ops:Warship Gunner
Need for Speed Undergr.*
Nightfire

**P = 1 6**
Primal
Prince of Persia: S. of Time*
Pro Evolution Soccer 3
Project Eden
Project Zero

**R = 1 8**
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Red Faction
Red Faction 2
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Return of the King
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Robot Wars
Run Like Hell

**S = 1 9**
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims
Smackdown! 4: S.Y.Mouth
Smackdown! 5: H.C.T.Pain
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Soul Calibur 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
SSX 3
Star Trek: Elite Force
Stuntman
Summoner 2
Syberia

**T = 2 0**
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Fellowship of the Ring
The Getaway
The Great Escape
The Italian Job: L.A. Heist
**The Return of the King**
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
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Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
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Top Gun: Combat Zones
**True Crime: Streets of LA**

**V = 2 2**
Vice City, Grand Theft Auto

**W = 2 3**
Way of the Samurai 2
Wolfenstein,Ret. to Castle
WWE Smackdown! 4 SYM
WWE Smackdown! 5 HCTP

**X = 2 4**
XIII (Thirteen)*
X-Men 2: Wolverine's R.

**Y = 2 5**
Yu-Gi-Oh! D.Monsters 2
Yu-Gi-Oh! D. of Roses

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007 Agent Under Fire

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Gold Pokemon
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Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
**Pokemon Gold**
Pokemon Red
**Pokemon Silver**
Pokemon Trading Card
Pokemon Yellow
Power Rangers: Time Force
Yellow Pokemon
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Dark Duel Story
Zelda: Links Awakening DX

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Alone in the Dark 4
Beyblade
Blade
Broken Sword
Broken Sword 2
Die Hard Trilogy
Digimon World
Dracula Resurrection
Dracula The Last Sanctuary
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Driver
Driver 2
Gran Turismo
Gran Turismo 2
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
LMA Manager 2002
Martian Gothic
Medal of Honor Undergr'nd
Planet of the Apes
Resident Evil 2
Shadowman
Silent Hill
Soul Reaver
Spyro the Dragon
Syphon Filter 2
Syphon Filter 3
The World is Not Enough
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 4: Last Revel.
**Tomb Raider 5: Chron.**
Tomorrow Never Dies
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
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